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A HISTORY OF  
FRENCH ARCHITECTURE  
FROM 1494 TO 1661

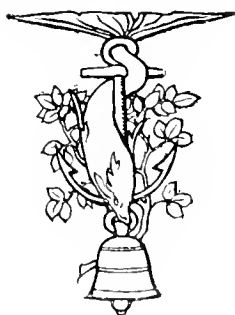


# FROM THE REIGN OF CHARLES VIII TILL THE DEATH OF MAZARIN

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HISTORY OF RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND," ETC. WITH DRAWINGS

BY THE AUTHOR AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS



VOL. I

LONDON

1911

CHISWICK PRESS : CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.  
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

TO  
RICHARD NORMAN SHAW, ESQ. R.A.  
ARCHITECT  
IN ADMIRATION OF HIS GENIUS  
AND EXAMPLE





## INTRODUCTION

**I**N the following pages I have endeavoured to trace the history of French Neo-Classic architecture from its tentative beginnings in the reign of Charles VIII to its mature development in the middle of the seventeenth century. My first idea was to attempt a continuous history of the movement down to the break-up of the classical tradition at the time of the French Revolution, but the subject is so enormous that it would be impossible to do justice to it in any summary manner, and I have therefore limited the present survey to French architecture prior to the death of Mazarin. This is a convenient date at which to pause, because on the one hand the art had by that time completely arrived, and on the other the personal rule established by Louis XIV after the death of Mazarin introduced certain new social and political factors, which materially affected the arts of France.<sup>1</sup>

In order to complete my account of the sixteenth century, I have included a sketch of the latter days of Gothic architecture. Dates of course overlap in an inconvenient manner. François Mansart died in 1666, and Le Vau only four years later, yet I have not included Errard, Le Vau, Cottart, or Antoine Le Pautre in this work, because they represent a different phase in architecture, and belong to the group of men who were taken on by Colbert after the death of Mazarin, and their work was the starting-point of the new era of Louis XIV, rather than the last word of the age of Mazarin and Anne of Austria.

The guiding purpose of this history has been to show the continuous growth of French Neo-Classic architecture from the date of its first introduction into France. In my judgement it is unhistorical to limit the Renaissance to those two or three generations of the time of Charles VIII, Louis XII, and François I, when builders and ornamentalists were blundering about in endeavours to grasp the spirit of the Italians which lamentably failed of their purpose. Nor should it be confined to that brilliant period which followed, to the generation of De l'Orme, Bul-

<sup>1</sup> In regard to the dates 1494-1661, the former has been selected as the date of the first Italian expedition, and the latter as the date of the death of Mazarin.

lant, Lescot, Goujon, and Primaticcio. The movement should be regarded as a whole, and as a long, and in the main unbroken, series of efforts in one direction. The steps by which out of these efforts a reasonable and national version of Neo-Classic architecture finally emerged are clearly traceable. The manners of the different stages, of François I, of Henri II, of the last of the Valois, and of Henri IV, can of course be differentiated. There was a perceptible check in the last thirty years of the sixteenth century, and a minor check again after the Fronde, but there was no permanent set-back. French architecture advanced triumphantly to height after height, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, until the whole fabric of the arts was undermined by the sceptics on the one hand and Romanticists on the other in the latter part of the eighteenth century. At that date its traditions crumbled into a chaos from which the French seem to be slower in emerging than we ourselves with a somewhat parallel experience in England.

I offer this account with diffidence. Apart from personal difficulties of time and opportunity, the subject is so vast and intricate, the material so abundant, that there is a constant danger of losing the clue to the main track of history. Moreover, the work of complete verification is beyond the power of any single student. I have for several years endeavoured to quarter the ground in France and to study on the spot the buildings referred to in the text; but no one who has not himself attempted the task realizes the extent of country to be traversed and the immense architectural wealth of France to this day, even though the country has been swept from end to end in the wars of the Ligue, the Fronde, the French Revolution, the Franco-Prussian war, and those chronic and spasmodic risings which began with the burning of the nearest nobleman's house and ended with the hanging of rows of unfortunate peasants on the nearest tree. Nor were these the only dangers. Noble owners themselves in the eighteenth century did not hesitate to destroy the houses of their ancestors to save the cost of repairs, and the "restorations" of the nineteenth century have been scarcely less disastrous than the Jacqueries of the eighteenth. Moreover, the study of domestic architecture in France has its own peculiar difficulties. The churches and cathedrals are open without reserve to every one, at almost any hour of the day, but this is by no means the case with the great country houses of France. There are generous exceptions of



course, but "on ne visite pas" occurs too often in the notes of the excellent Guides Joanne, and the student is hampered by somewhat illiberal regulations, administered with inexorable stupidity by some grim old woman at the gate. For reasons easily understood, the responsibilities of owners of historic houses seem hardly to be realized in France as they are in England. The difficulties of getting at the facts are considerable, and I may say at once that the most I can hope to have done is to have indicated the general trend of the development of Neo-Classic architecture in France, and to have suggested lines for the classification of its innumerable examples.

The conditions of the study of architecture have been greatly altered, and not entirely for the good, by photography. In recent years, collections of photographs of historical buildings have been manufactured with indefatigable industry. The Germans began it, and now the French have come down to it. These collections are easily made, and with the help of paste and scissors large and sumptuous volumes can be turned out with the least possible difficulty. As an artist and as a student of history I incline to regret the majority of these volumes. These short cuts to knowledge lead to ignorance. Students, who in the old days acquired their skill by laborious study of buildings, assimilating what they drew and what they measured, now rely on mechanical reproductions. It is as if a man hoped to acquire scholarship by the sole and incessant use of cribs and translations, instead of painfully wrestling with the language itself, its grammar and construction, the idiom and rhythm of its actual phrasing. From the point of view of history, the majority of these volumes are absurdly inadequate. The latest publication, on French châteaux, is a large and expensive collection of photographs in two volumes, with brief historical notes on the various owners, but the designers of these great houses are scarcely referred to, and there is not a single plan or section throughout the work. When one recollects the superb collections of engravings of architecture that were issued from time to time in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, culminating in Blondel's magnificent "Architecture Française," uncomfortable misgivings suggest themselves as to the direction of progress in the arts. In place of the solid knowledge of architecture of the eighteenth century, we have eaten so recklessly of the tree of knowledge that we have lost our standard of taste,

and our knowledge is too thin and flimsy to be real knowledge at all. Photography is a useful servant, but a dangerous guide. Not only are photographs, even the best of them, misleading as to the scale and quality of the work, as any experienced architect knows, unless the photograph is supplemented by more intimate knowledge of the building, but the photograph tells only the present condition of a building, it shows old work and new "restorations" and additions with impartial ignorance of their history. Theories, therefore, founded on photographs are apt to go very much astray. It is essential to study the buildings themselves, and those series of old engravings which fortunately French artists in the latter part of the sixteenth and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were never tired of producing. For purposes of material and comparative study photographs are of course indispensable, and I gladly acknowledge the value of the admirable series of photographs issued by the Commission des Monuments Historiques, and the fine generosity with which they place the series at the service of students and writers, but it would be simply impossible to write the history of French Renaissance architecture without the prints of Du Cerceau, Israel Sylvestre, of Marot and the Perelles.

A word in regard to some of my authorities. No work that I am aware of exists that attempts to deal with the whole of this period as a consecutive development. Among English writers Mrs. Pattison (Lady Dilke) confined her account of the Renaissance in France (1879) to the sixteenth century, and wrote without reference to the *Comptes des Bâtiments*, which are, of course, the authority *par excellence* for the first seventy years of the century. Miss Sichel's attractive studies deal with famous men and women of that period from the standpoint of literature rather than that of the arts. In 1909 Mr. W. H. Ward brought out a scholarly edition of certain of the drawings by Du Cerceau in the British Museum. With these exceptions English students of architecture have, in fact, neglected this period. French writers, on the other hand, have at times devoted the most patient industry to its study, and at others seem to have lost all interest in the subject. Throughout the middle of the last century, the period with which I am dealing was investigated minutely, but after about 1860 it

seems to have proved less attractive to the general reader than Viollet-le-Duc's adroit manipulations of mediaevalism. Since his day the history of architecture has been expounded by a well-known French writer almost exclusively from the standpoint of the engineer, and it is only within comparatively recent years that attention has again been concentrated on the Neo-Classic art of France. The result is that most of the authorities available belong to a past generation. Berty, for example, died as long ago as 1867. Nearly all the materials, and for the sixteenth century they are very abundant, were collected years ago by the indefatigable research of such accomplished antiquaries as Léon de Laborde, Anatole de Montaiglon, Adolphe Berty, H. Destailleur, and Louis Courajod, men who, in addition to rare critical and historical abilities, possessed, in the case of three of them at any rate, a literary sense that redeemed the most unpromising subjects. De Geymüller, also an unwearied student of the sixteenth century, used to mistake ornament for architecture. He was, as for example in his work on the Du Cerceau, apt to get overwhelmed by the details of his own researches, and the facts that he collected are often of more value than the conclusions that he drew from them. Léon Palustre and H. Destailleur stood alone, I believe, among these men in having been trained as architects. To Destailleur we owe the invaluable "*Recueil d'Estampes relatives à l'ornementation des appartements*" (Paris, 1863), and to Palustre that monumental work on the French Renaissance, which appeared from time to time (vol. i, 1879; ii, 1881; iii, 1885), and which he did not live to complete. His idea was to include in his survey all the important sixteenth-century Renaissance buildings of France, but the châteaux of the Loire valley, for example, are not dealt with. His work is undoubtedly one of great value, and was an heroic attempt at an almost impossible task. It was spoilt, however, by fixed ideas, first, that the Renaissance in France was an isolated movement, beginning with Charles VIII and ending with Charles IX; that is, he failed to see its essential continuity, reaching back into the past and far forward into the future; and, on the other hand, as a patriotic Frenchman, he was anxious to glorify French art at the expense of Italian, and whenever he came across the name of a master-builder he at once labelled him architect of the building, with all the connotation of the term in its modern use. For example, he actually suggested that Chambiges, the builder of

St. Germain-en-Laye, was the master of Lescot, the fine Court gentleman and reputed architect of the Louvre.

Among more recent authors, M. Dimier has written a brilliant, if one-sided, account of that rather fascinating artist Primaticcio, somewhat discounted by most fantastic views of the relation of architecture, painting, and sculpture. As to the very important subject of French architecture during the first sixty years of the seventeenth century, with the exception of Laborde's very full notes, no systematic attempt to deal with it was made till 1893. In that year the well-known historian, M. Lemonnier, brought out his "L'Art Français au temps de Richelieu et de Mazarin," one of the most masterly studies of an artistic movement that has ever been written. M. Lemonnier accomplished the feat of placing the arts in actual relation to the social and political conditions of the time, without rhetoric and without sentimentalism, and one could only wish that he had devoted more of his rare ability and knowledge to the architecture of that neglected period, and had filled up in detail his admirably just and well-balanced appreciation of the work of Lemercier and his contemporaries. For the general history of France from 1500 to 1661, the best authority is, of course, the "Histoire de France," edited by Ernest Lavisse, vols. v, 1, 2; vi, 1, 2; and vii, 1.

After all, however, the principal authorities are the old ones, the *Comptes des Bâtiments*, the engravings of Du Cerceau, Marot, Silvestre, and the Perelles, writers such as Du Breul and Sauval, the notes of Félibien, Germain Brice, Piganiol de la Force, Blondel, and Dezallier d'Argenville. The works referred to are rare, and in most cases costly, and they are little known to English readers. The history of the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi*, 1528-1571, is curious. Before 1856 Laborde discovered in the Bibliothèque Nationale a modest volume bound in calf, containing in manuscript the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi*, some of them transcribed in full, some in the form of a *précis*. On the first page is the signature of "J. F. Félibien des Avaux," that is, Jean François Félibien (1658-1733), son of André Félibien des Avaux (1619-95), historians to the King. Félibien the elder had intended to write a history of the royal châteaux, and, according to M. Guiffrey,<sup>1</sup> the accounts were transcribed for him for this purpose in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Unfortunately, they are a mere fragment

<sup>1</sup> See "Introduction," by M. Guiffrey, *Comptes*, i, xvii.

of the original accounts. For the accounts from 1571-99 the headings only remain, and Guiffrey estimated that Félibien must have had access to some sixty or seventy registers of accounts which are now completely lost. Laborde, who had more or less completed his work in 1856, never issued it, though he drew on it largely for the works that he issued from time to time, and the *Comptes* were not finally published till 1877-80, when they were brought out under the direction of the "Société de l'histoire de l'art Français." Félibien most unfortunately never finished his work on the royal châteaux, but two manuscript copies of his notes have survived, a magnificent copy at Chiverny, bound in red morocco with the royal arms, and an inferior copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale. It was from the latter copy that in 1874 the Société de l'histoire de l'art Français printed the little volume of a hundred and four pages with the title "*Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des Maisons Royales et Bastiments de France.*"<sup>1</sup>

Blondel's "*Architecture Française,*" a work more often referred to than read,<sup>2</sup> is too well known to need any particular notice here. Blondel himself drew largely on his predecessors, on Marot for many of his plates, and on earlier writers for his information. In fact, most of the accounts of this period consist of repetitions from earlier writers, and the real sources of information resolve themselves into the works of Du Breul, Sauval, and Piganiol de la Force. Jacques du Breul, who was a priest of the Abbey of St. Germain des Près, published his "*Théâtre des Antiquités de Paris*" in 1612. He died in 1614. Further editions appeared in 1618 and 1639, the latter with a very important supplement, containing a list of the monasteries, churches, buildings, and improvements in Paris carried out between the years 1610 and 1639. This supplement is, for the purpose of architectural history, the only valuable part of this solid work of over a thousand closely printed pages. The next important work in date of publication was Germain Brice's "*Description de ce qu'il y avait de plus remarquable dans*

<sup>1</sup> The "*Mémoires,*" edited by A. de Montaiglon, deal with Blois, Les Montils, Chambord, Montfrand (near Chambord), Chenonceaux, Chaumont, Montrichard, Chiverny, and Menars, followed by notes on the quarries in the neighbourhood of Blois, on the qualities of stones, and an account of the restoration of the spire of the Cathedral of Chartres. I have followed Félibien in the spelling of Chiverny and Chenonceaux.

<sup>2</sup> It is a very costly work. The excellent facsimile reprint by Pascal and Guadet costs £17 10s., and what the price of an original copy may be I have no idea.

Paris" (1684), followed in 1685 by "Paris ancien et nouveau," by Le Maire, of which Piganiol de la Force says that "it is a good book but all taken from Du Breul, exceedingly badly arranged and extremely tedious to read." The same writer continues that Le Maire having died, Germain Brice "se trouvant sans concurrent et à son aise" plagiarized freely from Le Maire, and set himself up as an original historian, "quoique (il) ne connut ni les sciences ni les savans, et qu'il n'apportât à la composition de son livre que beaucoup de présomption et un peu de facilité à écrire en notre langue." To Piganiol de la Force, Germain Brice was a hated rival. Brice perhaps refers to him in the preface to his eighth edition (1725) where he mentions certain persons who withheld information he had asked for. The fact was that if Piganiol de la Force was the sounder antiquary, Germain Brice had a pleasant manner of writing, and committed the unpardonable offence of being popular. Piganiol de la Force was a gentleman of Auvergne, born in 1673. He attached himself to the Count of Toulouse, and was made governor of his pages. He appears to have devoted all his spare time to the study of history and topography, wrote a description of France, to all intents a guide-book, descriptions of Versailles and Marly, an itinerary of France, and finally the description of Paris, of which the best edition is that of 1765, in ten volumes. He died in 1753, a keen and able antiquary, soured by jealousy of his rivals. Meanwhile, in 1725, there had appeared the long-delayed publication of the "Antiquités de la Ville de Paris" by Sauval, by far the most authoritative and interesting of the older writers.

Henri Sauval, who was an *avocat*, and a man of good social position, was a born antiquary, rather of the order of Anthony Wood. For twenty years he delved in the antiquities of Paris, and nothing came amiss to his mill, the city of Paris, the manners and morals of the Parisians, personal anecdotes, religious foundations, hospitals, Bohemians, the royal palaces and their contents, the hotels of Paris, academies, the Jews and their persecutions, *aventures plaisantes*, marionettes, saltimbanques, strange illnesses, prodigies and monstrosities, duels, executions, the orders of chivalry, and the amours of the kings of France. In addition to this, he also wrote exceedingly interesting accounts and criticisms of the architecture and works of art of his time. Sauval appears to have communicated the results of his researches to

his friends, but seems to have been unfortunate. Among his enemies, the layman said he might understand the arts but could not write French, and the artists said he might be able to write but knew nothing of the arts. Whether from chagrin, or because he died<sup>1</sup> before his work was completed, Sauval never published his book, and it did not appear till 1724, when it was issued in three fine folio volumes, with the title of "Antiquitez de la Ville de Paris." Its arrangement is imperfect, but it is a most interesting work and simply invaluable in regard to the condition of the arts in Paris during the first sixty years of the seventeenth century. Sauval was the contemporary of many of the men of whom he wrote. "Reçu partout et comme homme de lettres, et comme le futur historien de Paris, il put à son aise examiner et comparer, il vivait familièrement avec tous les artistes qui concourent à orner ces nouvelles habitations."<sup>2</sup>

Antoine Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville, who was born in 1680, was a rather prolific writer of the eighteenth century, who collected anecdotes of artists, shells, and engravings, was a secretary to the King, *maître des comptes* and a member of the Royal Society. He died in 1756. Mariette, in his "Abécédario," speaks of him with contempt, and his description of Paris as the merest guide-book,<sup>3</sup> written almost entirely for the connoisseurs of the various Galleries of pictures in Paris, and not omitting to give a full account of his own collections. On the other hand the "Théorie et la Pratique du Jardinage," illustrated by Alexandre le Blond, editions of which appeared in 1709, 1715, 1722, and 1747, has been attributed to d'Argenville by Blondel and others, and is, as is well known, the authority on the methods of design of Le Nôtre and his school, and an attractive book. (Three editions of the translation by James of Greenwich appeared in England.) Why the author should have persisted in withholding his name is not known. In 1762 d'Argenville published his "Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux peintres," and it was in continuation of this that his son issued his "Vies des fameux

<sup>1</sup> Piganiol de la Force, "Desc. de Paris," 1725, Preface, xxx, says Sauval died in 1669 or 1670; Laborde, "Le Palais Mazarin," note 228, says that Sauval's work was ready in 1656, and that he had his authorization to publish in 1654. Guy Patin, the doctor, writing in 1654, mentions a young man, "Monsieur Sauval, Parisien," as going to publish a history of Paris. The edition of 1724 was corrected and supposed to be brought up to date.

<sup>2</sup> Laborde, "Le Palais Mazarin," 65.

<sup>3</sup> "Voyage Pittoresque de Paris," 4th edition, 1765.

architectes depuis la Renaissance des Arts," a useful if not always accurate book, which, in addition to an account of the Italian architects, deals with the most important of French architects from Lescot down to Jacques Germain Soufflot, and with French and other sculptors from Goujon down to Slodtz, Pigalle, and Coustou. D'Argenville the younger, who was honorary counsellor and a master in the *Chambre des Comptes*, described himself on his title-page as of the "*Academie Royale des Belles Lettres de la Rochelle*."

Of the engravers, Marot, Silvestre, and the Perelles are invaluable for the seventeenth century. Gabriel Perelle, the father, was born at Nancy, the birthplace of Callot, early in the seventeenth century, and died at Paris about 1675. He had two sons, Nicolas the elder, and Adam (1628-95), both of whom drew and engraved views and landscapes in a manner closely resembling that of their father. Adam had two pupils, Fouard of Paris, and Pierre Aveline, of whom Mariette says: "*Comme il n'est jamais sorti d'une extrême médiocrité il lui fait peu d'honneur*." Jean Marot, not to be confounded with his son Daniel, was an architect of some reputation and more particularly a draughtsman and engraver, who issued his series of engravings of buildings known as the "*Grand Marot*" and the "*Petit Marot*." He is supposed to have died about 1679. The "*Petit Marot*" is a beautiful little quarto volume of some hundred and eight pages, giving plans, sections, and elevations of various buildings.<sup>1</sup> Of the "*Grand Marot*" I have not yet come across a perfect copy,<sup>2</sup> but while looking over the books in the library of Mellerstain in Scotland I came across four large volumes of engravings in architecture, in which the greater part, if not all, of the views given in the "*Grand Marot*" are included, together with views by Silvestre, Perelle, and others. By the courtesy of the owner,<sup>3</sup> Colonel Lord Binning, I am enabled to reproduce many of these

<sup>1</sup> The title is "*Recueil des Plans, Profils, et Elevations des Plusieurs Châteaux, Eglises, Sépultures, Grottes, et Hôtels, Bâtis dans Paris et aux environs, avec beaucoup de magnificence par les meilleurs Architectes du Royaume, descrivez, mesuréz et gravés par Jean Marot architecte Parisien*." There is no date, but as it includes *Maisons*, it must have been published after 1650. My copy has the title and 108 pages. It is a rare and costly little book.

<sup>2</sup> The copy in the R.I.B.A. library has no title-page or date, and is some forty plates short. It was bought at Lord Bessborough's sale in 1848 for £2 10s. A copy, said to be complete, was sold in 1910 for 410 francs.

<sup>3</sup> The collection was made in France by George Baillie, an ancestor of Lord Binning,



engravings, which are of first-rate importance. Jean Marot also published "Le magnifique Château de Richelieu." A list of authorities will be found on p. xxvii of this volume. I should apologize for the number of my notes, but it is not possible in any other way to include material which is relevant to the subject without overloading the narrative.

For an artist of one country to attempt a critical account of the art of another must always be a work of some temerity. The *nuances* of national feeling and temperament may escape him, and he may be tempted to set up irrelevant standards of judgement. I have endeavoured to avoid this pitfall so far as possible, and if I have ventured on criticisms of famous architects of the past, I would repeat the apology of Blondel, prince of professors, who urged that, on grounds of intellectual honesty, he felt it his duty to point out what he believed to be the faults of architects, however famous, when their work conflicted with those great principles of design which he was convinced by his knowledge and experience were paramount in architecture. First principles are not so obvious to us now as they were to Blondel. We have lost touch of those ideals which, to the artists of the eighteenth century, were unassailable truths. But fine planning, fine proportion, fine scale, simplicity in phrasing, and selection in ornament, will always be essential qualities in architecture, and it is with reference to these standards, which apply to all architecture, that I have ventured to make my criticisms. It is impossible in the arts to demonstrate with scientific precision why one rates one man's work higher than that of another, why some infinitesimal adjustment of scale and proportion, some elusive subtlety

at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Vol. i contains thirteen views of Fontainebleau, fourteen large plates and twenty small of Chantilly, fifty-two plates of Versailles, Clagny, Maisons, Sceaux, and many other houses, published by J. Mariette at the sign of the Columns of Hercules in Paris. J. Mariette was the grandfather of the author of the "Abécédario." Vol. ii deals with the hotels, churches, and other buildings of Paris, with 116 engravings by Jean Marot. Vol. iii contains the Louvre and Tuileries, including Lemercier's and Bernini's designs for the Louvre, eighteen plates of the Louvre, thirteen of the Tuileries, all by Marot, various tombs and monuments, fifteen plates of fancy views of Baalbec and Greek Temples, Vaux le Vicomte and various hotels in Paris, all engraved by Jean Marot, and some inferior engravings by Mariette himself. Vol. iv contains some admirable plates of Italian villas by Perelle, the bridges, "Places," and gateways of Paris, the Tuileries and Palais Royale, the Val de Grâce and the Invalides, all by Perelle; various "perspectives" and other works, "Les Places, Portes, Fontaines, Eglises et Maisons de Paris," twenty-nine plates by Perelle, twelve bad views by Jacques van Merlen, forty-seven "Vues des belles Maisons des Environs de Paris" by Perelle, altogether about five hundred and fifty engravings.

of design should impel one to the conviction that in one case we are before a work of genius, in another before the work of merely an able man. We are driven back in practice to the Aristotelian position, these things are as they are judged to be by the man of knowledge and understanding. Fashions of art come and go, and the aim of the student and the critic should be to find the points of essential stability, those moments in the long range of history at which the genius of the art, if I may so put it, alights for an instant and signalizes its presence by some personal expression, before it resumes its flight, not to reappear perhaps for a generation, perhaps for a century. It is the duty of the student to discover those rare occasions, and there are many things in the way—the demands of practical knowledge with which every architect must comply, the calls of everyday life, the claims of multifarious and exacting business—yet it is a work that should be done, for every artist, whatever his personal aims, must as a first and indispensable step place himself in touch with the ideals of the past. In the rush of modern life it is more than ever necessary to recall attention to the work of those who have gone before us, how they did it, why they did it, and to those great artists who have handed on the torch from generation to generation. Both in this and other regards I cannot but anticipate a lively sense of the imperfections of my work. I can only say that it has been inspired by a sincere and grateful admiration of all that is beautiful in this French architecture of the past.

## ERRATA IN VOL. I

P. 88, footnote. The correct title of the book referred to is "Topographie Historique du Vieux Paris."

P. 104, line 2 from bottom of text, *for* "columns" *read* "column."

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PLASTER FROM THE MONUMENT OF THOMAS JAMES, CANON OF DOL, BY JEAN JUSTE (P. 7)

[R. B. del.]

# A History of French Architecture from the reign of Charles VIII till the death of Mazarin

## CHAPTER I

### THE ITALIANS IN FRANCE

THE study of architecture has suffered from excessive classification, and in following the history of the French Renaissance it is peculiarly necessary to bear in mind its historical continuity as a whole. For example, the architecture of François I can be differentiated from that of Henri II, and the differences of detail and method between the successive periods are obvious and important, but the essential fact to keep in view is that one period grew out of another, and it is only by tracing the pedigree as a whole, by letting the mind range backwards and forwards over the whole field, that it is possible to form a broadly comprehensive view of the scope and meaning of the Renaissance in France. It has, if I may say so, been too much the habit of historians to deal with the art of the Renaissance as if it was a solitary chapter in history, and not one of a long series of chapters, the volume of which perhaps is not yet closed. An attentive student of French architecture will find that there is no abrupt break in its history. From the end of the fifteenth century onwards, each phase moves on by slow degrees to another, so gradually and quietly that it would be possible for a keen architectural morphologist to trace backwards the forms of modern French classic, through all the stages of their transformations, to the first crude efforts of the sixteenth century. It is this continuity which gives not only its charm but also its value to the study of the French Renaissance. Architecture has always been one of the finest expressions of French genius. In order to understand that architecture, it is necessary to treat it not as a dead art, but as a living movement, not only to look back to the sources from which it borrowed its first vague versions of neo-classic, but forward to those developments far ahead which were only latent in the early days of the sixteenth century.

The task of disentangling the forces at work in those early days is by no means easy, and French writers have added to our difficulties by advocating diametrically opposite views. In the middle of the last

century it was held that modern French architecture owed its origin mainly to the Italians, to Il Rosso and Primaticcio, to the sculptors and craftsmen introduced by François I. The discovery, however, by Laborde of the "Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi" revealed the names, at any rate, of various masons, carpenters, and others employed on the royal buildings, who were undoubtedly Frenchmen, and who, in the absence of any indication of an architect, were hailed with enthusiasm as the founders of the French Renaissance. M. Palustre and his followers indignantly repudiated the foreigners, and assured their grateful countrymen that they had in Giles le Breton, Chambiges, and Pierre Nepveu architects who need not fear comparison with those of any country. In recent years the pendulum has swung back to the Italian theory. M. Dimier, in his *Life of Primaticcio*, has assigned to that dexterous artist an altogether predominant rôle in modern French art and supports his thesis with much ability. Thus we are met at the outset with the question whether in the buildings of François I there existed an architect at all, and if he did, whether he was a Frenchman or an Italian. The question is not only one of documentary record, but also one of the intrinsic evidence of the buildings themselves. Can we, in these earlier examples, trace the hand of an architect? If, for example, a building shows conspicuous individuality and an architectural quality of its own, the conclusion must be that an architect was at work here, no matter what the guise under which he appears in documents, whether valet-de-chambre, maker of models, or master-mason. On the other hand, the fact that a man repeatedly appears in the accounts for certain buildings as "master of the works," would not prove that he was an architect, if those buildings are precisely similar to many others of the same period, and do not, in fact, show any personal quality of design. It may be that the French masons were actually the general designers of the buildings on which they worked; but it is a long step from this to the assertion that Le Breton at Fontainebleau was an architect in all respects on the same footing as De l'Orme at Anet. The problem is to ascertain whether the master-mason possessed and exercised individual initiative, or whether he was only foreman of a body of more or less skilled and intelligent workmen. The only means of solving this problem is by the careful study not only of the building accounts, but also of the buildings themselves, and the question is one of more than archaeological interest, because the answer to it will explain certain characteristic qualities of the architecture of François I. Another

difficulty in the way of any very definite and precise classification is that, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, artists had not yet specialized. In France, at any rate, the architect had not detached himself from the builder, and sculptors still knew something of architecture. Goujon, for example, began as a mason and "cutter of stones," and was for a time architect to the Constable Anne de Montmorency before he specialized as a sculptor. Later on there were others, such as Hugues Sambin of Dijon, who began as a wood-carver, and is supposed to have ended as an architect. Lastly, there is that constant obstacle to any very exact classification, the persistence of mediaeval tradition, not only in details but in methods of plan and construction, long after the first introduction of neo-classic motives. For the first half of the sixteenth century the arts of France were in the melting-pot. Hard as it clung to its place, the old tradition was failing, and no new standard and definite conception of architecture had arisen instead. The initiative of building came from the King and his courtiers, not from the recognized and habitual needs of successive generations. Buildings were begun and left unfinished, individual Italians appear on the scene and vanish with bewildering rapidity, thrust out of place by their colleagues, or murdered, or, like Cellini, simply going off in a huff; or bands of these hungry artists settle in certain towns, giving a semblance of schools of design which as yet had no real root in the country, and in the result no consecutive following. The picture so far is only that of the kaleidoscope, without form or purpose. Indeed, in its earlier days the Renaissance in France deserved its name of "the New Fashion." It was the plaything of the Court, rather than the necessary result of the pressure of social and physical conditions, such as those which had for centuries moulded the development of mediaeval architecture.

Yet a change of some sort was inevitable. Mediaevalism as a living force died with Louis XI. His policy was reversed by his successor, and the end of the fifteenth century saw the first of those wild adventures in Italy, which brought France out of her seclusion and plunged her, for good or bad, into that vortex of international politics which was to develop later into the European system. The whole outlook on life was now to be profoundly modified, and though here and there strains of mediaevalism crop up like the strata of earlier formations, its ultimate disappearance was only a question of time, there was no serious possibility of a reversion to methods created by social conditions which no longer existed. The age of the great

church builders ended with the fifteenth century. The walls of the mediaeval castle began to fail of their purpose before serious artillery. The mediaeval house was absurdly inadequate for habitable purposes. Meanwhile there had grown up beyond the Alps a magnificent art of life, and it was at the very point of the exhaustion of mediaevalism that the first vision of this new art, and this wider conception of its possibilities dawned upon France, in all its brilliant fascination. The Italian expeditions were politically a failure, blow after blow was struck to establish untenable positions in Italy; and yet their indirect effect on France was far-reaching and permanent. From these disastrous ventures dates the art of modern France. The French nobility learnt that the courts of Italy were pleasanter places than the ill-lit rooms of their feudal castles, and that there existed an art which aimed at and attained a beauty and joyousness of life never dreamt of by the sad and patient artists of the North.

As was to be expected, the first attempts at the Italian manner were sporadic and unrelated, in no sense representing any school of design or the normal character of the architecture of the country. Later on we shall find some semblance of a school, that is, bodies of artists working on more or less uniform lines; but in the earlier examples the Italian monument is plumped down in the midst of incongruous surroundings, and even if it was actually made in France, might just as well have been imported direct from Italy—as actually happened in certain cases. The earliest example is the monument, in the Cathedral of Le Mans, to Charles, Count of Maine, who died in 1472. This consists of a carved sarcophagus on lions' feet in Istrian stone, supporting a slab of black marble on which rests a beautiful recumbent figure. The design and workmanship are pure Italian, and are attributed to Francesco Laurana the sculptor and medallist, who was at the court of Anjou from 1460 to 1467, and returned there from Sicily in 1475, the probable date of this monument. Its most conspicuous merit is its severe restraint, a quality which makes it impossible to agree with French writers such as M. Gonse, who attribute to this artist the panel of the Carrying of the Cross in the retable of S. Didier at Avignon, a work of exuberant vulgarity without the least suggestion of Italian art, unless it may be in the architectural background.<sup>1</sup> Laurana's

<sup>1</sup> M. Gonse, "La Sculpture Française," 38, says: "Le magnifique retable d'Avignon est très significatif; il est à demi français, à demi Italien," but it is an injustice to Laurana to attribute to him this detestable crowd of figures. There is a cast of the panel in the museum of Comparative Sculpture at the Trocadero.



[V. D. p. 19]

TOMB OF CHARLES, COUNT OF MAINE: LE MANS CATHEDRAL (P. 4)



[Photo.]

[V. D. p. 19]

TOMB OF THE CHILDREN OF CHARLES VIII: TOURS CATHEDRAL (P. 7)





work in France was an isolated incident, from which no conclusion can be drawn except that the tide was turning, and that henceforward we may look for wave after wave of the new ideas spreading northward beyond the Alps. Till the end of the fifteenth century, indeed, the French Court remained unconscious of what was being done in Italy, and it was not till after the expeditions of 1494-6 that Frenchmen seem to have realized in the least degree what was in the air. Charles VIII entered Rome on New Year's Eve 1494, and Naples early in the following year, but the whole of his army was driven out of Italy by 1496, and he died in 1498. Yet he had seen enough to fall under the spell of Italian art, and he made a characteristic attempt to import it wholesale into France. In 1495 Nicolas Fagot received 1,593 livres tournois for the transport of "plusieurs tapisseries, librairie, peintures, pierre de marbre et de porfire et autres meubles," from Naples to Lyons and thence to Amboise. The total weight was 87,000 pounds. Twenty-two men were employed, and the journey took thirty-four days.<sup>1</sup> Palustre wrote in contemptuous terms of the handful of gardeners, painters, and cabinet makers brought back by Charles VIII, but as a matter of fact in the letters patent of 1497, for the payment of certain artists, occur the names of Fra Giocondo, Dominique de Cortonne and Guido *dit* Paguenin or Paganino.<sup>2</sup> The death of Charles VIII stopped any undertakings, and his successor, Louis XII, the "father of his people" as he was called, cared little for the arts, and spent the greater part of his reign in a series of unsuccessful attempts in Italy (in 1499, 1500-1, 1507) culminating in that attack on the Venetian Republic which ended with the death of Gaston de Foix at Ravenna, and the withdrawal of the French army from Italy in 1513. The political conditions of these earlier years were unfavourable to the arts, and the result was, to some extent, a false start. The artists named in the patent of 1497, with the exception of Paganino, appear so far to have done little or nothing. Paganino carved the

<sup>1</sup> "Archives de l'Art Français," iii, 305-6.

<sup>2</sup> "Etat des Gages des Ouvriers Italiens employés par Charles VIII," "Archives de l'Art Français," i, 94-128. Among twenty names, however, the account contains only one "deviseur des bastimens," "Frère Jehan Jocundus," and one "ouvrier de maçonnerie," Jerome Passerot. Luca Becjeane and Bernardin of Brescia have also been included, but Beejeane, though an "inventeur subtil" and a "deviseur des bastimens," was paid for his skill in constructing hen-houses, and "Bernardin de Bressia" was a "menuisier de toutes sortes et couleurs." Dominique de Cortonne (Il Boccador) is called "menuisier de tous ouvrages et faiseur de chasteaulx," while Paganino, curiously enough, is described as "painctre et enlumineur." De Montaiglon, who transcribed and annotated this account, says that Paganino left France in 1516, and died at Modena in 1518.

medallions of the emperors for George of Amboise at Gaillon, and made the tomb of Charles VIII in St. Denis, destroyed in 1793, when the bronze figures were melted.<sup>1</sup> Paganino, or Guido Mazzoni, to give him his real name, was the "Master Pageny" who gave a design for Henry VII's monument at Westminster. Fra Giocondo was credited by Vasari<sup>2</sup> with having done many works for Louis XII, and he must have been well known in France. Budé refers to him as his master in architecture and says that he discovered the greater part of Pliny's letters in a library at Paris, and that the Aldine edition was printed from this manuscript. Among other notable works Fra Giocondo preserved for 200 years the old Roman bridge at Verona, and diverted the course of the Brenta from Venice. Of the "altre infinite opere" which according to Vasari he did for Louis XII in France there is no trace whatever, with the exception of the Pont Notre Dame at Paris, and probably there was little foundation for the story but Vasari's genial admiration for the man of whom he wrote. Gaillon, which was once attributed to him, shows little trace of Italian design in the architecture, nor is there any mention of him in the accounts; and the château of Sarcus,<sup>3</sup> said to have been designed by him, was in fact built after the supposed date of his death in 1519. Rare glimpses are caught of Il Boccador later on, but to all intents he disappears from the records for the next thirty years, and so far no certain evidence has been found for attributing any buildings of the first quarter of the sixteenth century to these "ouvriers du bâtiment." I think it must be taken that the work of the first batch of Italian artists who came to France was limited entirely to ornament, painting, and carving. How little they influenced architecture can be judged from the part of the château of Blois which was built for Louis XII.

The movement, however, had actually begun. At the end of the fifteenth, or very early in the sixteenth, century the Juste family appear on the scene, settled at Tours. The Justes were a family of Florentine sculptors, whose real name was Betti, and who came from the village of San Martino a Mensola near Florence.<sup>4</sup> It appears that they were quarry owners at Carrara as well as carvers, a combination characteristic of the old-fashioned tradesman artist. Giusto Betti, a sculptor who died in 1486, had three sons, Antoine, André, and Jean, who established

<sup>1</sup> "Archives de l'Art Français," i, 129-132.

<sup>2</sup> Vasari, iii, 250-255 (1647 ed.).

<sup>3</sup> In Dept. Oise, destroyed about 1833.

<sup>4</sup> Milanese. See the articles by A. de Montaiglon on La Famille des Justes, "Gazette des Beaux Arts," 1875-6.

themselves at Tours about 1500, and built up an extensive practice in tomb-making and monumental sculpture. In 1502 Jean<sup>1</sup> made the monument to Thomas James, Canon and Treasurer of the Cathedral of Dol, which still stands in the north transept. The design is ordinary Florentine of the fifteenth century. Two square pilasters, with high pedestals and composite caps, carry an enriched entablature; under this and between the pilasters is a semicircular arch, beneath which is the tomb with pedestals and four square piers at the angles, supporting a canopy. The design is dull, the charm is in the detail, the amorini carrying swags, griffins, vases, and satyrs blowing hunting horns wound round their heads. It is a suggestive instance of what the Italian monument meant so far, and for several years to come, namely, ornament and little else. The beautiful tomb to the children of Charles VIII. in the south-west chapel of the choir of the cathedral at Tours (1506) has been attributed to Jean Juste, but Palustre assigned it to Jerome da Fiesole and Michel Colombe.<sup>2</sup> It is a curious and charming example of the Italian manner in immediate juxtaposition to the native Gothic. The pathetic little figures of the children and the supporting angels on the top of the tomb are fifteenth-century Gothic in design and treatment, whereas the sarcophagus with its amorini and escutcheons is pure Italian, Jerome da Fiesole is also said to have executed the ornament on the tomb of François I of Brittany in the cathedral of Nantes. I shall return to this point in dealing with the work of Michel Colombe in Chapter VIII.

Antoine Juste was employed to make the statues for the chapel and the bas-reliefs in the court of Gaillon,<sup>3</sup> and also executed the ornament for the tomb of Louis XII (in 1516-30) at St. Denis, the contract for which was undertaken by his brother Jean, who carried out the recumbent figures, "Just de Juste," son of Antoine, undertaking the figures of the Apostles between the columns along the sides, and the figures of the virtues at the angles. The tomb was completed in 1531; and it appears from an entry in the accounts<sup>4</sup> that it was made at Tours and transported to St. Denis.<sup>5</sup> Jehan Juste the younger, son of Jean Juste, was

<sup>1</sup> The inscription on the tomb is on a small tablet on the west pilaster, and states the tomb to be "opus magistri Johñis [word indecipherable] cognomine Justus et Florentinus." Palustre says wrongly that it was by Antoine Juste.

<sup>2</sup> Palustre, "Arch. de la Renaissance," 194.

<sup>3</sup> "Comptes de Gaillon," Deville, 419-20. It appears from the entries that Antoine executed here a portrait of the Cardinal, a bas-relief of the battle of Genoa, a great greyhound, the head of a stag, and other subjects.

<sup>4</sup> Comptes, ii, 208.

<sup>5</sup> The last payment made to Jehan Juste, "Tailleur et sculpteur du Roy," was made 17th May 1531, "pour la conduite et la assiette de la sepulture du feu Roy" ("Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi," ii, 200-5).

employed on the tombs of Philippa de Montmorency at Oiron in 1538,<sup>1</sup> of Claude Gouffier in the same church in 1538, and on the tomb of Guy d'Epinay at Champeaux. Lastly, Juste de Juste was employed on stucco work at Fontainebleau, under Il Rosso and Primaticcio, and so bridges over the interval between the first invasion of the Italian artists and their next great effort in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The Juste family were not architects, nor were they first-rate sculptors. They were ornamentalists, familiar with the Italian manner of arabesques, and possessed sufficient technique to introduce figures in relief into their ornament and even to carry out figures in the round without conspicuous failures. First-rate Italian artists, apart from the painters, had not yet been attracted to France, and only the minor men, men who had failed in Italy, settled in France. These men in turn found themselves out of the running when abler men such as Primaticcio appeared on the scene, and some of them drifted over to England. At Broughton Castle, in Oxfordshire, there is a large overmantel in stucco, which was undoubtedly executed by some Italian who had worked at Fontainebleau. The difficulty, both in France and in England, was that the earlier instructors of the native workmen were, so far as architecture was concerned, the blind leading the blind. On the whole, this first invasion missed fire. It left behind it some beautiful monuments, which look strangely forlorn in the midst of their late Gothic surroundings; such as that marvellous altar-piece in the chapel of St. Joseph in the church of St. Michael at Bordeaux, the doorway of the Dalbade at Toulouse, the tomb of Jean de Langeais, and the astonishing organ gallery of the cathedral at Limoges (1533), or the screen round the apse of the choir of La Trinité at Vendôme. Traces of its ornament remain in most of the great historic houses of France. The staircases of Blois and Chateaudun, Azay le Rideaux, and the exquisite details of Bohier's work at Chenonceaux, or those arabesques, delicate as fine goldsmith's work, over the entrances of the Hôtels Cujas and Lallemand at Bruges. It is often graceful in fancy and skilful in execution, but it is not architecture, nor does it show any real perception of the relations of architecture and sculpture.

It is noticeable that in all these early instances the technique is more accomplished than in later work. The Italians lost their cunning, or rather unconsciously dropped their standard in the company of native

<sup>1</sup> Palustre, "Arch. de la Renaissance," 284. Juste de Juste, "imager," received payment for stucco work at Fontainebleau in 1536, 1537, and 1540 (*Comptes*, i, 95, 98, 99, 101, 102).

[R. 11]

DOORWAAL, HÖTTL, UJAS, BRUGES (P. 8)

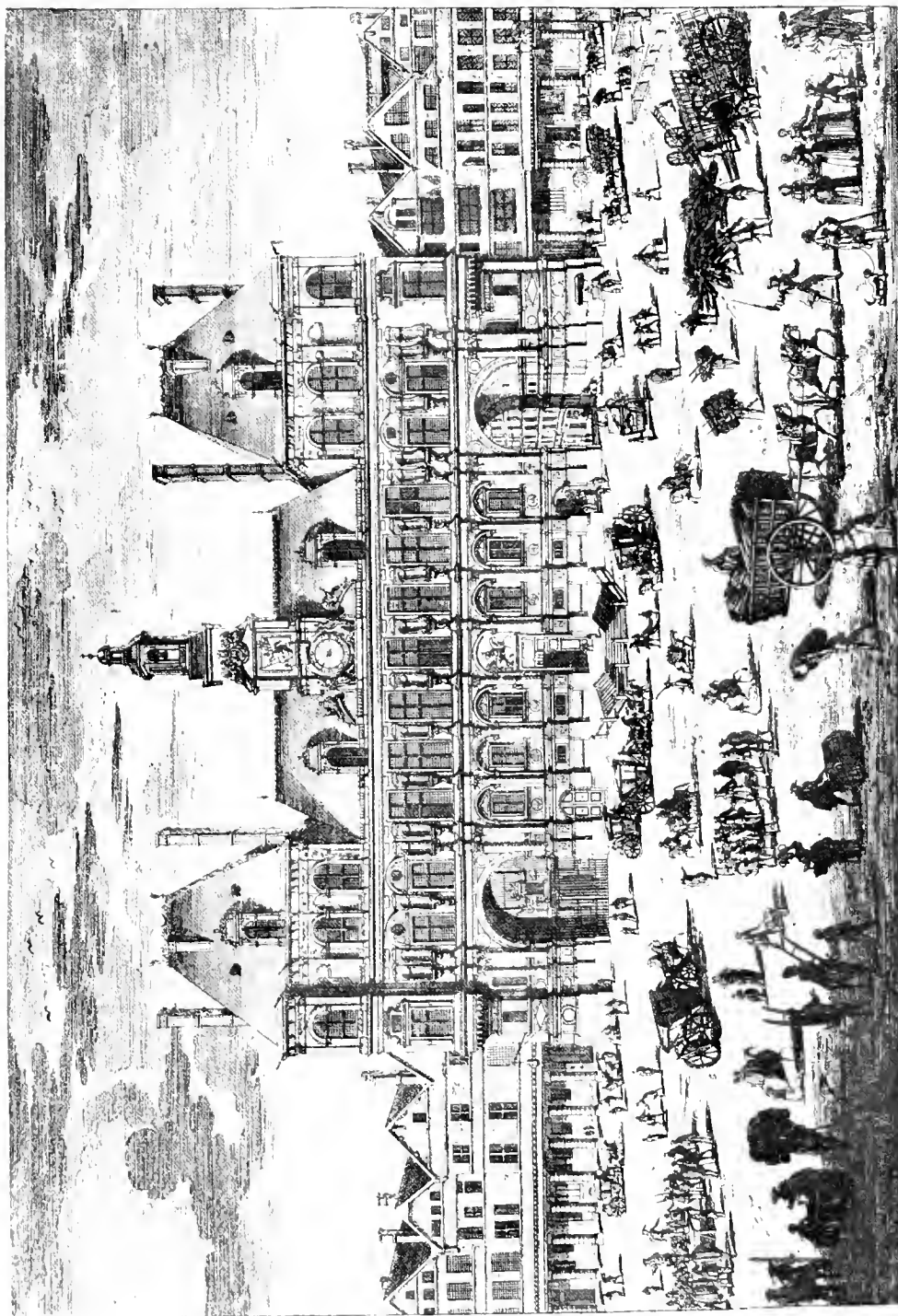
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L'HOTEL DE VILLE. - M. Hanschi-Plesca, le maire, a été nommé, le 15 mars 1953, sous le régime de l'Assemblée constituante, président du conseil municipal de la commune. M. Hanschi-Plesca, qui est né le 15 avril 1904, à Chisinau, est un ingénieur diplômé de l'Université de Chisinau. Il a été élu conseiller municipal en 1947, puis élu maire en 1950. Il a été réélu maire en 1953. M. Hanschi-Plesca est marié et a deux enfants. Il est membre du Parti communiste de la République populaire de Roumanie.



workmen. Moreover, the new ideas did not fall on virgin soil, but were sprung upon a country strong in its own tradition. French masons at the end of the fifteenth century had craftsmanship in abundance, and their own way of doing things; and French sculptors and image-makers had produced, and were still producing, work of extraordinary technical excellence. In the first instance these men seem to have been indifferent, even hostile, to the new influence. There is more of mediævalism than of the Renaissance in the figures of Michel Colombe, even though Colombe collaborated with Italians. As to the influence of Italians on French architecture, so far it amounted to nothing at all. The French master builders pursued their peculiar methods of building, finding stone-work for the Italian ornamentalist to carve, but otherwise indifferent to the new ideas. So far they were not expected by their employers to do anything else, and it does not appear that the French Court itself had any conception of the possibilities of neo-classic as handled in Italy, till at any rate the latter part of the reign of François I. The first authentic reference to an Italian architect as working for the Court does not occur till the year 1530, when an entry occurs in the "Dépenses Secrètes" of François I,<sup>1</sup> of payment of 900 livres to Dominique de Courtonne, architect, for various works done for the King in the last fifteen years, and consisting of models in wood of the towns and castles of Tournay, of Ardres, and of Chambord, models of bridges and windmills, and other works "in which he has lost much money." Dominique de Courtonne was identified by Laborde with Il Boccador; and it has been ascertained that he had a house at Blois<sup>2</sup> from 1512 till 1531, the year of his employment in the Hôtel de Ville at Paris. The temptation to find in Il Boccador the architect of Blois, Chambord, and other castles on the Loire is a strong one; but the entry in the Comptes must be tested by the design of Chambord itself, and that is so entirely French, except in details of ornament, that it is impossible to assign it to an Italian. Dominique's work was probably confined to making a model of the building to the instructions of the King or of his officers. Whether "Pierre Nepveu, dit Trinqueau," was the architect either, is a question to which I shall return in dealing with the French master-builders.

The story of Il Boccador, or Domenico Bernabi di Cortona, is rather perplexing. He was one of the original batch of Italians brought back to France by Charles VIII, after the expedition of 1496. In 1507 he was valet-de-chambre to the Queen. From 1512-31 he had a house

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, ii, 204.

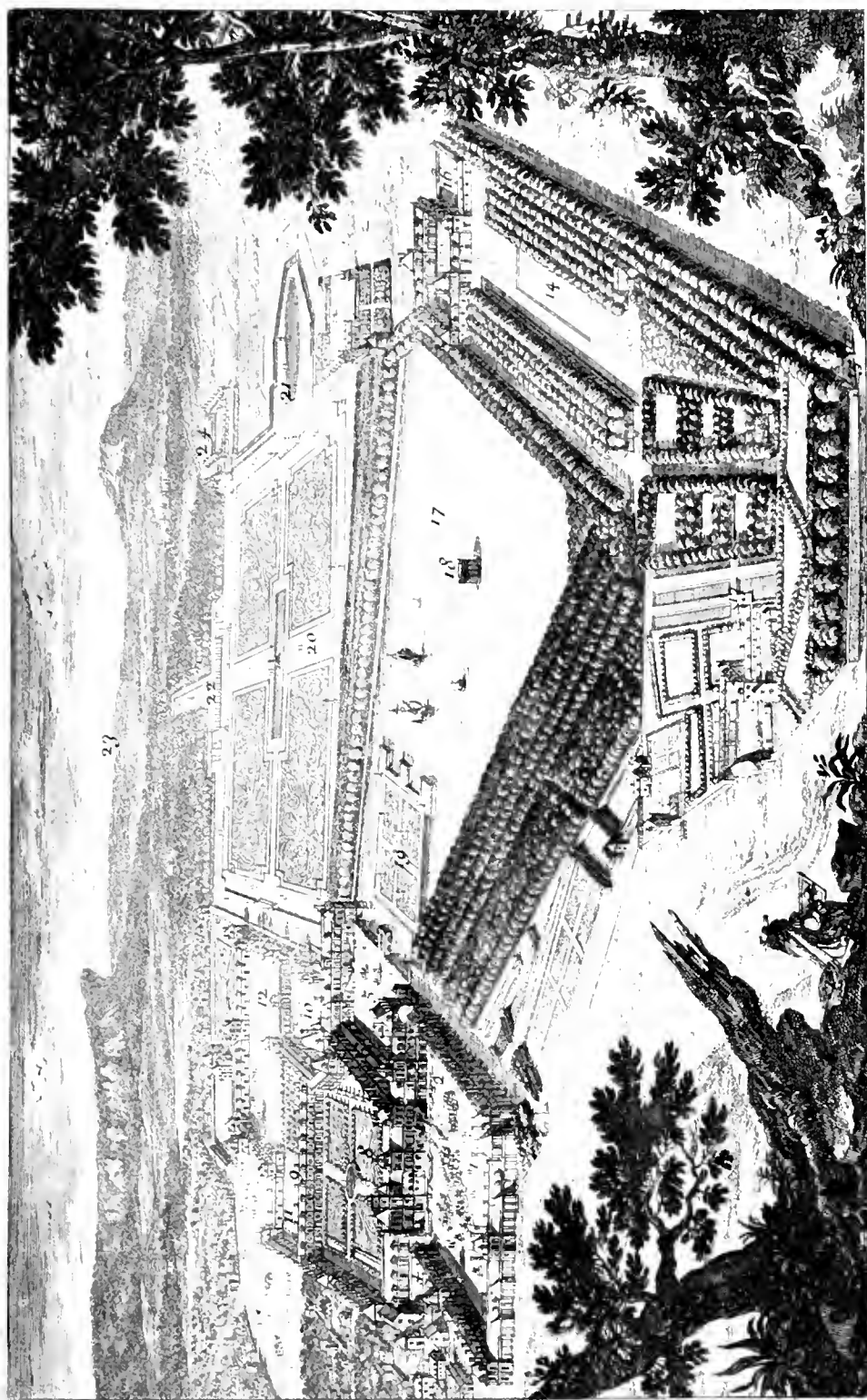
<sup>2</sup> M. Bournon, "Blois," 110.

at Blois. In 1523 he appears as "maître des œuvres de menuiserie du Roy et valet de chambre de la Reine,"<sup>1</sup> but no record remains of any work done by him between 1495 and 1531, with the exception of the payment for models quoted above. About 1531 he was undoubtedly called in to design and carry out the building of the Hôtel de Ville in Paris.<sup>2</sup> The first stone of the new building was laid in 1533, and an inscription stone was built in over the principal entrance, recording the date, and the fact that the building was erected "Domenico Cortonense, architectante." Domenico was placed in charge of the works at an annual salary of 250 livres, with Asselin, "maître des œuvres de la ville et commis à la surintendance de la charpenterie," and Chambiche, "tailleur de pierres, maçon et constructeur des ouvrages," as his assistants. The work seems to have dragged from the first. Money was scarce, and Il Boccador lazy. In June 1534 the municipal authorities had to remonstrate with "the architect" and his assistants for all going off to dinner and leaving the building to look after itself. The work dragged on till 1541, when most of the workmen were withdrawn to help in the fortification of Paris. In 1548 Regnault Bachelier was in charge. Sauval<sup>3</sup> says that the first and second floors were only completed by about 1549, and adds "que l'ordonnance alors ayant semblé gothique on réforma le dessin," and that a fresh design was submitted to Henri II at St. Germain en Laye. The work proceeded intermittently through the sixteenth century, but no serious attempt was made to complete the building till 1605, when Marin de la Vallée undertook the contract for the completion, and actually finished the building in 1628. The seventeenth-century work was carried out "suivant le dessein en parchemin." This design Calliat identified with Il Boccador's original draft, and in his opinion Il Boccador was the principal author of the design of the Hôtel de Ville as it existed before it was destroyed by the Commune. There are difficulties in the way of this account, such as that Il Boccador had been thirty years in France before he was called

<sup>1</sup> In 1543 he is still styled "maître des œuvres du Roi."

<sup>2</sup> See "Le véritable architecte de l'Ancien Hôtel de Ville de Paris," Bernard Prost, "Gaz. des Beaux Arts," 1891, ii, 250.

<sup>3</sup> Sauval, "Antiquités de la ville de Paris," ii, 483; Calliat, "l'Hôtel de Ville de Paris," 1844, 1, 5. Most of the details to which Sauval calls attention, such as the equestrian figure in bronze of Henri IV by Biard the elder, the paintings by Pourbus, the wrought-iron balustrades by Thoulousin, "aussi bien que les têtes de Méduse du portail, qui font peur, tant elles sont hideuses et bien exécutées," dated from the early part of the seventeenth century. The Hôtel de Ville was burnt during the Fronde, and the figure of Henri IV repaired badly by Biard the younger.



*Vous avez le Fontaine-bleau*

[illegible]

1	La Cour du Chaud-Gau	7	La Salle du Bal
2	La Galleries d'Espe	8	Le Jeu des Echecs
3	La belle Chapelle	9	La Galleries des Cafés
4	Le Jeu de Pique	10	La Cour des Académies
5	La Cour des Fontaines	11	Loges du Ruychelbais
6	La Galleries de Fontaines	12	La Conscience

12	le Parc des Cuvettes	18	la Vallée du Tourneval
13	le Fort de la Motte	19	le Jardin du Prieuré
14	le Fortin de la Motte	20	le Portier de la Tour
15	le Mont	21	le Tylor
16	le Mont	22	le Tylor
17	le Champ	23	le Champ



in to design any important building, unless Chambord can be assigned to him; and there is the difficulty of the very exiguous salary (250 livres a year), as compared with the 1,600 livres afterwards promised (but not paid) to Serlio. It also appears, from M. Calliat's own drawings of the building, that much of the internal detail as it existed was at least a generation later than that of Il Boccador. These difficulties led M. Vachon, relying on Sauval's remark quoted above, to assert that the building as designed by Il Boccador was a Gothic building destroyed in the time of Henri II. The evidence, however, collected by M. Prost is conclusive. The mention of Il Boccador on the inscription stone (p. 200), the records of his employment, the express statement of Sauval in his "*Antiquités de la ville de Paris*," leave no doubt that he, at any rate, supplied the model of the Hôtel de Ville, and superintended its execution. Sauval says: "Dominique Boccador dit de Cortone qui en fit le dessin et conduisit l'edifice," received 250 livres salary. In 1533 Dominique received 72 livres "pour plusieurs portraits en plattes formes" of the new Hôtel de Ville; and in that year the conduct of the work was formally committed to "Dominique de Becquator dit de Cortonne, architecte demeurant à Paris, suivant la modèle par lui fait veu, et accordé par le Roi." The illustration shows the building as it was in the middle of the seventeenth century. With this exception, and that of Il Giocondo's bridge, no Italian can be shown to have designed any buildings of the earlier Renaissance in France.

The second invasion of the Italians was on a much larger scale, and had a far-reaching influence on the decorative art of France. It was no longer a matter of skirmishing by isolated artists here and there, but an organized enterprise, backed by the resources of the Court, and led in its final stages by an artist of something like first-rate ability. Il Rosso and Primaticcio were on a higher level than Jerome da Fiesole, good artist as he was, and the Justes; and Primaticcio, at any rate, finally gained an extraordinary ascendancy at the French Court, and in his latter years more or less controlled all the arts in France. The ground in France was better prepared than in England. The average level of cultivation was higher, and the introduction of the new ideas did not depend so exclusively on a few exceptional men as it did in England. Moreover, the political conditions in France were far more favourable and the consequence was that whereas in English art Italianism died with Henry VIII, in France, under the initial impetus given by François I, it secured a permanent footing; and the course of its development, or rather of its assimilation by French artists, was not

arrested by any such check as that break with Rome which retarded the development of English neo-classic by something like a hundred years.

Few sovereigns, moreover, have taken such a personal interest in the arts as François I of France. He possessed something of the humanism which distinguished his sister, Marguerite de Valois, and he also had an immense aptitude for princely magnificence, and a mania for building. The entries in his private accounts give some idea of his tastes. In 1531 the sculptor "who made the great copper horse at Paris," is paid 700 livres, his salary for seven months. In the same year 3,820 livres (*tournois*)<sup>1</sup> are paid for money, lodgings, and materials advanced by Pierre Spine, a Florentine merchant, to "Jehan Francesque Fleurentin, maître sculpteur," for this or another copper horse made in the faubourg of St. Germain des Prés at Paris. Two hundred gold crowns apiece are paid to MM. Daves and Trusac, readers in Greek, and to MM. Vatable and Guidacerius, readers in Hebrew, and 150 crowns to the reader in mathematics. A Florentine merchant receives 2,050 crowns for a piece of gold cloth for the Queen's robe. Payments are made to Italian players of fifes rebecs sackbuts and hautboys, to Jeronimo of Naples and Passello de Mercuriano, gardeners at Blois, to Loys Alemanni of Florence for sending to Italy for printing type, to Leonard Spine the Florentine for two great pearls shaped like pears, and each weighing some 23 carats, which the King had presented to Catherine de Médicis, Duchess of Urbino.<sup>2</sup> And there are many such entries of payments to artists, scholars, musicians, jewellers, gardeners, falconers, fencing masters, and others, giving glimpses of inestimable value into the private life of the Court and incidentally suggesting some of the channels through which the Italian Renais-

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, ii, 200-225. In the Comptes Spine is spelt "Spure."

<sup>2</sup> I give the following entry in full, to give some idea of the accounts (Comptes, ii, 229): "A Ambroyse Casal, autre marchand millanoy, pour son paiement d'une croix et un nef de prouesme d'esmeraulde garnie de perles et de rubiz, quatre petitz vases et une cucillère de la dite proesme d'esmeraulde, ung grant et deux petitz vases de lapis azenoyz garny d'or, une escriptoire d'agate, ung poignart à manche d'agate, garny de quatre dyamans, ung chappelet de cornaligne blanche, une selle et ung harnoy de cheval de velours cramoyz violet ouvré à broderye, une cotte et une paire de manchons d'or et de soye bleue, deux paires de manchons de satin blanc et bleu ouvrez d'or, deux peignouers, ouvrez l'un de soye cramoyse et l'autre de soye noyre, deux pièces de satin noyre, rayées d'or, l'une contenant neuf aulnes et demye, et l'autre dix neuf aulnes et demye, deux devants de cottes, deux paires de manchons, avec une autre cotte ayant devant et derrière, le tout de velours noyr figuré que le dit seigneur a retenu en ses mains pour en faire et disposer a son plaisir vi<sup>m</sup>. ii<sup>e</sup>. lxxiii<sup>e</sup>." (6273 livres).

sance made its way into France. Not only did these craftsmen and artificers give practical demonstration of their art, but the Italian men of affairs who settled in France followed the manner of their native country. Spine (or Spino) at Lyons, Salvi, also of Florence, at Bourges, were typical examples. The entries also reveal a trait in the character of François I which accounts for his record of failures, and that is, his habit of rushing off into great enterprises without counting the cost, and without the tenacity to carry them through. Du Cerceau says that many of his buildings were left to perish for want of a slater to patch the roofs.

To Fontainebleau, however, he was constantly faithful. After his return from his captivity in Spain, he determined to make this the most magnificent palace in France; and in 1528 he had the famous "Devis" or specification of works prepared,<sup>1</sup> and a contract for the masonry was entered into with Gilles le Breton, mason and stonecutter, living in Paris on 28th April 1528. Le Breton was at work from this time to May 1531, when his work was passed by the Crown surveyors. Payments for further works were made to Le Breton down to 1534, and to Nicolas Chastellet and Josse Maillart, master carpenters, for the carpentry, and to the slaters, tilers, blacksmiths, joiners, glaziers, plumbers, and paviors. The building work of the first contract was completed before 1535. So far, some 170,000 livres (170,392*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.*) had been spent,<sup>2</sup> and all the tradesmen employed had been Frenchmen. An obscure Italian appears, Pierre Paule, who is variously described as "cher et bien aimé valet de chambre ordinaire,"<sup>3</sup> "l'Italien,"<sup>4</sup> "concierger du château de Moulins," "par lui [the King] commis à la conduite et contrerolle des dits bâtimens et edifices,"<sup>5</sup> "architecteur,"<sup>6</sup> "Feu maistre Pierre Paule dit l'Italien"<sup>7</sup> (he died on 28th December 1535<sup>8</sup>). Among the forty-six entries of this man's name in the Comptes, he is only once described as "architecteur," and it is clear that his business was to check the accounts,<sup>9</sup> and transact secretarial business in

<sup>1</sup> Further particulars of this "Devis" will be found in Chap. III. It is given in full in Laborde, Comptes, i, 25-50.

<sup>2</sup> It is exceedingly difficult to assess these entries in modern money. M. Lemonnier suggests that the French livre equalled four francs; and that the buying power of a franc of the time of François I should be multiplied by five. So that the livre of the entries would be 20 francs of modern money, and the "livre, sous, denier," would be a little less than our £ *s. d.* See "Histoire de France," Lavissee, v, 266-9.

<sup>3</sup> Comptes, i, 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 50.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 52.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 59.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 109.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 119.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 361.

connection with the building, for which he received a salary of 1,200 livres a year.<sup>1</sup>

By 1535 the builders had completed the first batch of buildings at Fontainebleau. Now came the question of the decoration. The entries begin in 1535, and as they give the rate of wages paid to the various men employed, it is possible to disentangle the leading artists from the inferior men. It would appear from this evidence that the King in the first instance was quite willing to give French artists a chance with the foreigner. Thus Claude Badouyn, painter, and André Selon and Simon le Roy, painters and image makers, received the same wages as Laurens Regnauldin, Francesco Pellegrini, and Barthélemy de Miniato, painters of Florence, viz., 20 livres a month. Josse Foucques, a Flemish painter,<sup>2</sup> and Juste de Juste, image-maker, received the same; whereas Pastenaque and Tirigent, Flemish modellers, only received 12 livres a month for their stucco work. It is none the less clear that the control of this decoration was very soon placed in the hands of Italians. It would seem that for the first year or so up to the end of 1535, the works of stucco and painting were carried out by this mixed body of Italians, Flemings, and Frenchmen, without any responsible artist at the head. In April 1536 appears for the first time the name of "Maistre Roux de Roux (Il Rosso) conducteur des dits ouvrages de stucq et peinture," who receives 50 livres for superintending the work in the grand gallery during the month of April.<sup>3</sup> It seems that Primaticcio made his appearance in the same month, as his name (Francesque Primadicis, dit de Boullougne") is entered as receiving 25 livres for work during April as "conductor and designer of stucco work and painting in the Queen's Chamber." It is probable that by the end of 1536 the artists at work at Fontainebleau were organized into bands working in different parts of the palace under the leadership of Italians. Il Rosso controlled the work generally, with Primaticcio and others as leading hands, but it is quite inaccurate to say that the whole of the work at Fontainebleau was done by Italians; the majority of the names of the rank and file are French; and the importance in French art of what has been called, somewhat loosely, the school of Fontainebleau is the training and inspiration given to French sculptors, ornamentalists, and painters, by these competent

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 119.

<sup>2</sup> Not to be confounded with Jean Fouquet the French painter, who died before 1481.

<sup>3</sup> Comptes, i, 98. M. Dimier says that Il Rosso came in 1531, and Primaticcio in 1533, but gives no authority for his statements.





b.

FIGURE FROM THE GALLERY DE FRANÇOIS I: FONTAINEBLEAU (P. 14)



Italian artists. Pierre Bontemps, for example, is first mentioned here as being employed on the stucco work in 1536 at 15 livres a month.<sup>1</sup> In 1540-50<sup>2</sup> his wages are raised to 20 livres, and he is engaged in repairs to the figures of Tiber, Laocoon, Apollo, and Vulcan, for the great clock of Fontainebleau. In 1557 the same Bontemps contracted with De l'Orme for the reliefs on the tomb of François I, and became one of the ablest architectural sculptors of France. In 1537 Jerome de la Robbia, enameller and sculptor of Florence, is paid 250 livres for having made "a great round of baked and enamelled earth" over the entrance of the Château de Fontainebleau, furnished with a "grand hat of triumph,"<sup>3</sup> filled all round with various sorts of leaves and flowers, melons, cucumbers, pineapples, pomegranates, grapes, poppies, artichokes, citrons, oranges, peaches, apples, frogs, lizards, and lemons.<sup>4</sup> Bernard Pallissy would have his leaders believe that he owed his method entirely to his heaven-born genius, but it is pretty clear from this and similar descriptions that he owed it in the main to Jerome de la Robbia.

The work at Fontainebleau continued steadily from 1537 to 1540, and 166,076*l.* 10*s.* was spent on all works during these years. Some fresh names appear among the painters. Primaticcio had evidently sent to his friends in Bologna for further assistance. Four painters, Virgile Buron, Pierre Regnauldin (or Naldini), Jean Bauroy, and Antoine de Fantose,<sup>5</sup> all of Bologna, are mentioned. Il Rosso, "Maistre Rousse de Roux, peintre, maistre conducteur des ouvrages de stucq, et peintre de la dite grand gallerie" (*Comptes*, i, 134), continues to receive his 50 livres a month, whereas "Lucas Romain" (Luca Penni) and "Jerome Baptiste Baigne-cheval" (Bagna-cavallo) received only 20. But Il Rosso had fallen upon evil days. In 1539 his claim for several years' wages resulted in his receiving one year's salary only.<sup>6</sup> The King was worried and impecunious, and in this general atmosphere of suspicion Il Rosso wrongfully accused one of his painters of robbery, and in remorse at the discovery of his mistake poisoned himself in 1541. The gallery of François I at Fontainebleau is a characteristic

<sup>1</sup> *Comptes*, i, 100.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 191.

<sup>3</sup> "Chappeau de triomphe," *Comptes*, i, 112. On p. 117 is another entry of payment to "Jerome de la Robbia" for his plaques at the Château de Madrid in the Bois de Boulogne, and to Gratian François and Jerome de la Robbia for masonry on the same building. A further account of this work will be found in Chapter III. Jerome de la Robbia arrived in France in 1527.

<sup>4</sup> *Comptes*, i, 134.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 365, "a maistre Rouse de Rousse, painctre, pour les gages et entretenement d'une année sur plusieurs années qu'il prétend lui estre deues 1400 *l.*"

example of Il Rosso's methods. It was atrociously restored in the reign of Louis Philippe, and the paintings in their present state are almost worthless. The stucco work, however, remains and shows an astonishing and even intemperate facility of design and execution.

Meanwhile Primaticcio, supple and versatile, had been making himself useful in all sorts of ways, and was clearly the coming man; but there is no evidence to show that he at once succeeded Il Rosso as director of the works at Fontainebleau, as M. Dimier assumes. It seems probable that Il Rosso more or less completed the decorations of the first batch of buildings, and these were followed by another series of building operations, lasting till the death of the King. Primaticcio's position can be traced by the entries in the Comptes. In the accounts for 1537-40 Primaticcio was only being paid 20 livres a month, with occasional gratuities, such as 11 livres for cleaning and varnishing four Raphaels of the King's.<sup>1</sup> In the next set of accounts, 1540-50, he receives 1,000 livres for works of stucco, painting, and gilding at Fontainebleau, as certified by the Commissioner of Buildings, who, it appears from the entry preceding, was Philibert de l'Orme. This, therefore, was after 1548, when De l'Orme was appointed Commissioner; and the words of the entry show that Primaticcio's employment was limited to decoration.<sup>2</sup> Another entry (Comptes, i, 193) of the same date records that he had been to Rome to arrange for the purchase of certain medals, marble statues, and plaster models, which were conveyed to Fontainebleau in 133 cases.<sup>3</sup> Another entry shows that at this date Primaticcio was only receiving 25 livres a month,<sup>4</sup> just half of what Il Rosso had received in 1536. Primaticcio's rôle, in short, seems to have been that of the general handy man in the decorations of Fontainebleau, from the time he came to France down to the death of Henri II, when he superseded De l'Orme.<sup>5</sup> He was indifferently employed in stucco, painting, and gilding, in the purchase of materials or of works of art, in the arrangements for casting of statues, for the preparation of

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 131.

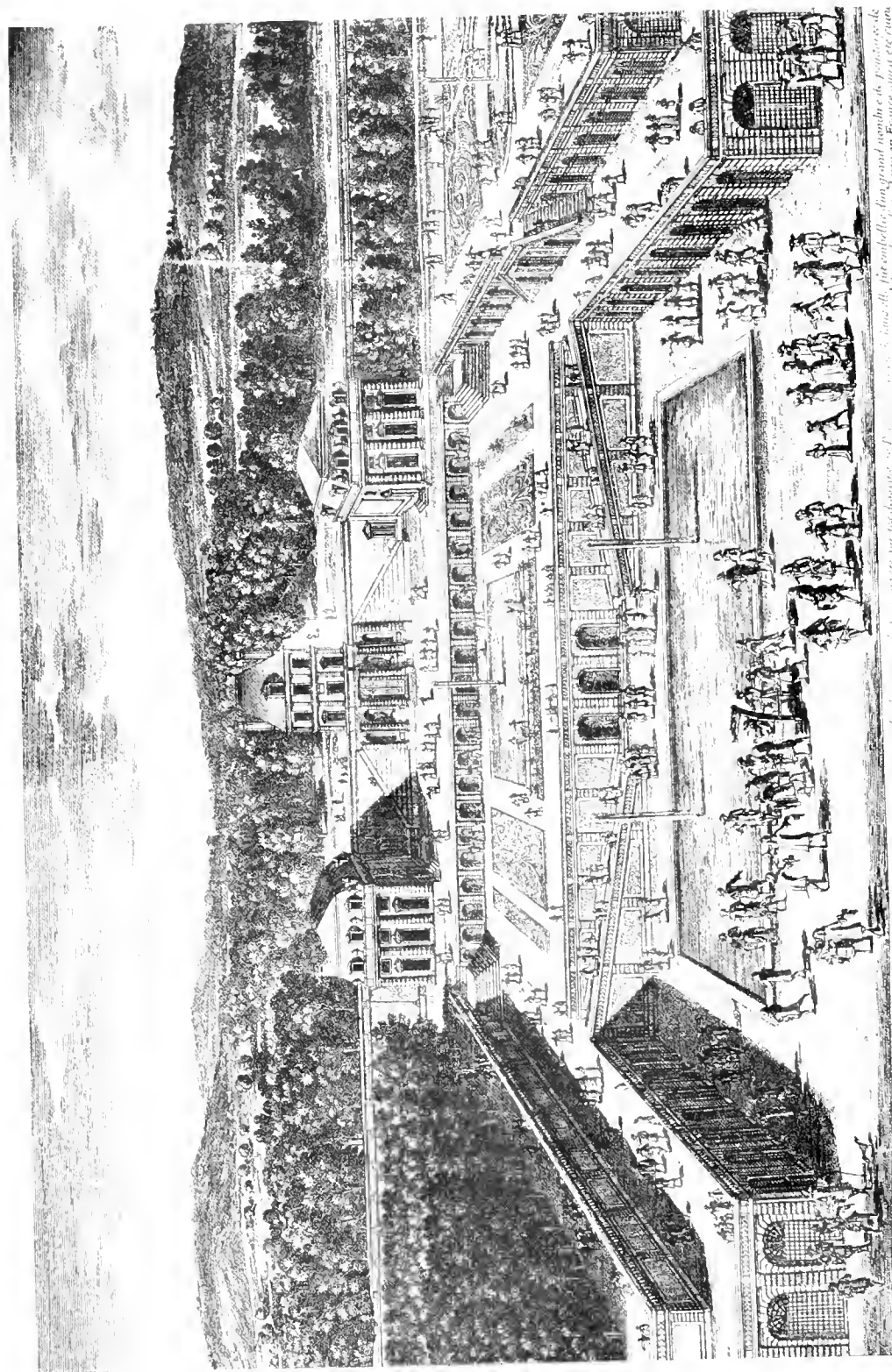
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 188. "A Francesque de Primadiciis, dit le Boullougne, peintre ordinaire du Roy, la somme de 1000 Livres, à lui due par les dits Seigneurs commissaires pour les ouvrages de stucq et peintures a fresque et dorures qu'il a fait et fait faire pour le Roy en chateau de Fontainebleau."

<sup>3</sup> See also Comptes, i, 199, 200, 204.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 197.

<sup>5</sup> The whole question is more fully discussed in an Essay on The Italians at Fontainebleau in my "Studies of Architecture." Further investigation has led me to modify some of the conclusions there given, more particularly in regard to the part played at Fontainebleau both by Serlio and Primaticcio.





LA GROTE DE MEUDON, au-dessus de Paris, sur la rive droite de la Seine, à une lieue de Paris, dans le département de la Seine-et-Oise. Cette grotte est une des plus remarquables de France, par son étendue, son architecture, et son état de conservation. Elle a été découverte en 1784, par M. de Meudon, et depuis ce temps elle a été visitée par un grand nombre de voyageurs. Elle est maintenant ouverte au public, et on y va par un chemin qui mène de Paris à Meudon.

THE GROTO OF MEUDON (P. 17)

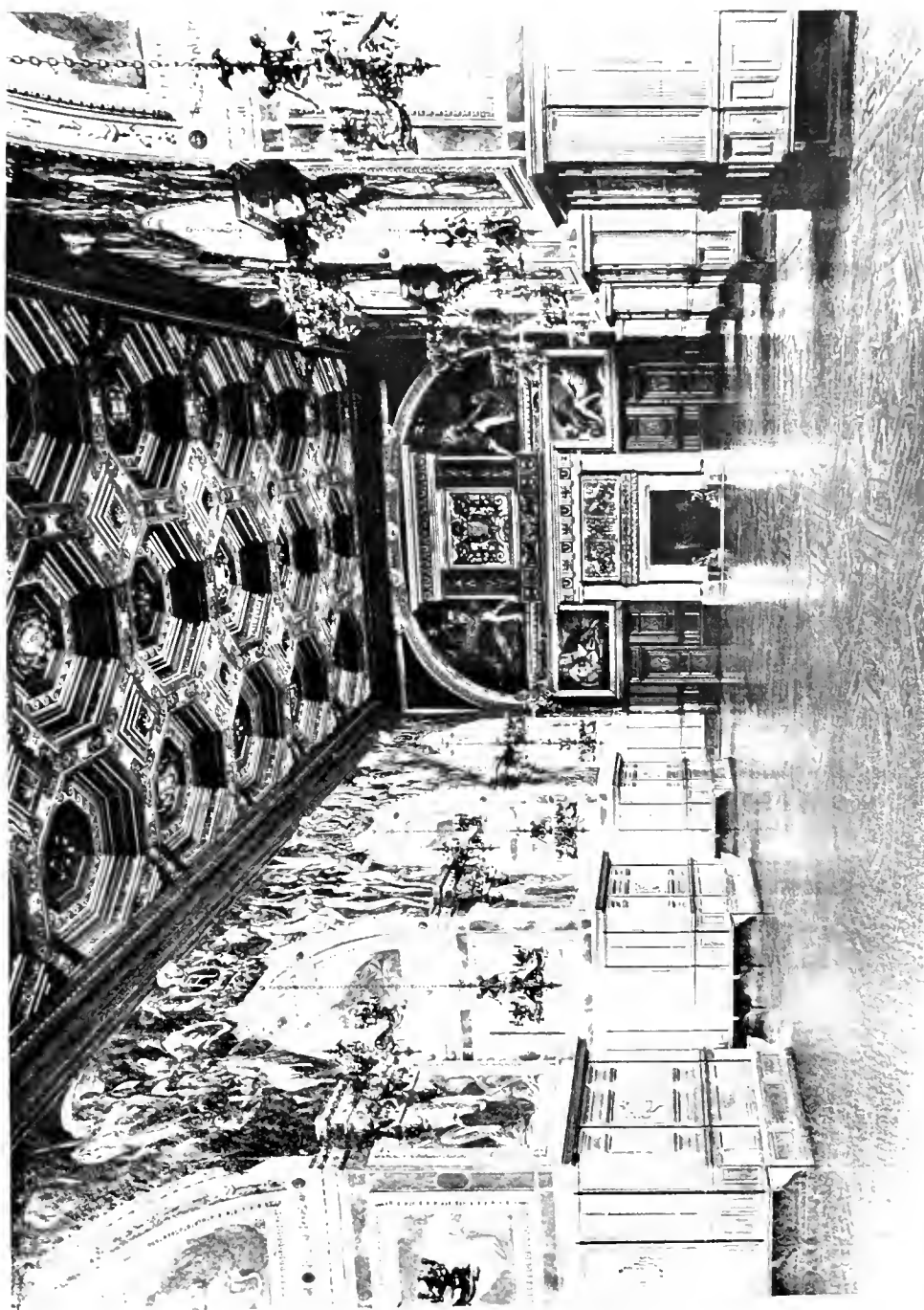
models, in short for any emergency in the decorations; and so matters continued till the accession of François II in 1559, who swept out De l'Orme and his brother, and appointed Primaticcio Surveyor-General to the Crown. That in this capacity Primaticcio played an active part in the direction of the arts of France there can be no doubt, but there is little trustworthy evidence to show that he designed architecture. In the list of 242 drawings given by M. Dimier as authentic only two drawings (Nos. 66 and 67) appear as architectural drawings, and these he maintains are designs for the tombs of the Guises at Joinville now destroyed. The only building which there is direct evidence for assigning to Primaticcio was the famous Grotto at Meudon. The inscription on the print which I reproduce says: "Le Cardinal de Lorraine la fit élever dans la siècle passé, sur les desseins de Primatice."<sup>1</sup> This is sufficiently vague; as a matter of fact Meudon was bought by Lorraine from the Duchesse d'Etampes in 1552, when De l'Orme was supreme at the Court and before Primaticcio was anybody. That he was employed on stucco work and the like in the Grotto at Meudon is known on the evidence of Vasari, but Vasari says nothing about his having designed the building, and the probability is that De l'Orme was the architect. It is practically certain that Primaticcio had nothing to do with the architectural design of Fontainebleau till at any rate 1559. The question remains, who designed those parts of the building which show distinct variations from the general methods of the master builder?

So far no architect of Fontainebleau has been mentioned in the accounts. Masons and carpenters, painters, gilders, sculptors, modellers, and stucco workers are mentioned, but no architect, and meanwhile, ever since 1528, large sums of money had been spent on the building. Yet it is not till December 1541 that letters patent were issued granting "Bastiannet Serlio peintre et architecteur du pays de Bologne," a salary of 1,600 livres a year, and travelling expenses at 20 sous a day, as painter and architect in ordinary to the King at Fontainebleau. It is exceedingly doubtful what work Serlio did at the Palace, the only other entries in the accounts are payments for the years 1540-50, under one of which he receives 96*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* for purchase of some Levantine skins, and an entry of payment of his wages at 400 livres a year, no longer a quarter. Both Palustre and M. Dimier deny that

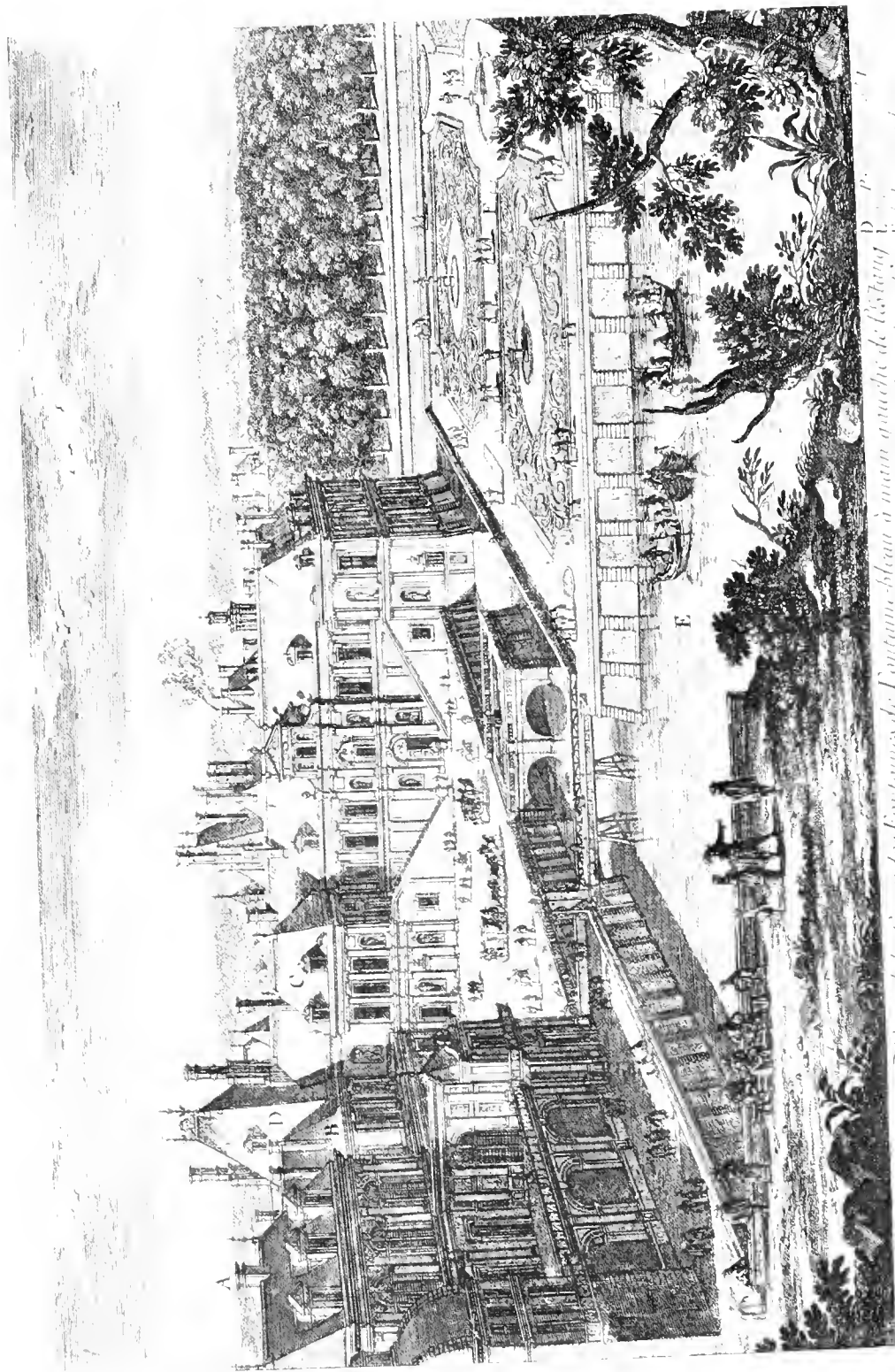
<sup>1</sup> See also Chap. V. The inscription on the print says the grotto was ruinous. The date of the print by Perelle is before 1680.

Serlio did any work at Fontainebleau, or, at any rate, any work worth considering: Palustre, in order to exalt the Le Bretons and Chambiges to the company of expert architects, and M. Dimier in order to claim all the reputable work in the Palace for Primaticcio. An examination of the accounts, however, and of the design of the building, does not bear out this view, and tends to show that Serlio did, in fact, take part in the building in the years between 1541 and 1548, when he was superseded by Philibert de l'Orme. In the dedication of his "extraordinario libro" to Henri II, published at Lyons in 1551, Serlio says that he had undertaken this work, because he had finished his labours, and found himself in solitude and "the company of beasts rather than men" at Fontainebleau. "Il per che ritrovandomi di continuo in questa solitudine di Fontanableo, dove sono piu fiere, che huomini." The reference to his past labours at Fontainebleau bears out the view that Serlio was actually employed on the design of part of the building, and the evidence of the accounts shows two things, first, that between 1540 and 1547 a great deal of building was going on at Fontainebleau. François I seems to have been in a feverish hurry to complete the Palace before his death. In those years 525,134*l.* 19*s.* was expended, of which the total amount for masonry alone was 117,415*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* whereas the total for all works in the years 1548-57 under Philibert de l'Orme was only 32,880*l.* 19*s.* 9*d.*, of which 14,550*l.* was expended on masonry. As I shall show, in dealing with the master builders, all the evidence shows that the Le Bretons and Chambiges were not architects at all, but mason contractors, and the question remains whether Serlio was, in fact, employed as architect in the extensive building operations of 1540-7. The Salle de Bal was being built 1540-1, and it was originally intended to have a vaulted ceiling, the corbels for the ribs being still in position. At the last moment, however, this was altered, Serlio says by command of "a person in superior authority," without any reference to Serlio though he was architect to the King and on the spot at the time. The date of the alteration is therefore fixed in a year preceding the King's death. Philibert de l'Orme was not yet in control, and Primaticcio was still in a subordinate position and was employed in miscellaneous decorative works. The only person who could have ordered the alteration was the King himself, and the inference is that he was the person "in superior authority" who made this ill-advised change, acting on the suggestion of the painter who wanted the wall space for his frescoes. The walls were finally decorated by Niccolò del Abbate





THE SALLÉ DE PEINTURE, LOUVRE, 1788



Vue de la Cour des Fontaines de Fontainebleau à main gauche de la fontaine  
 (P. 19)

THE 'COUR DES FONTAINES' : FONTAINEBLEAU. SHOWING THE AILE DE LA BELLE CHEMINÉE (P. 19)

from Primaticcio's design,<sup>1</sup> and a deeply coffered ceiling in wood, probably by Scibec of Carpi, was substituted for the vaulting. Serlio, however, does not claim the design of the room.<sup>2</sup> His grievance was that he was not consulted as to the alteration, and we must look elsewhere in Fontainebleau for evidence of his design.

The Aile de la Belle Cheminée with its rusticated ground floor, its broad flat pilasters and bold ramps ascending right and left on either side of the archway, is the best piece of architecture in Fontainebleau. Palustre considered that it was built in 1564-5, M. Dimier claims it for Primaticcio, but Félibien, who had access to a great deal of information now lost, says that Serlio did design work at Fontainebleau; and there is no reason to doubt this attribution.<sup>3</sup> It is a fine design of the middle Italian Renaissance, as remote from the timid blunders of the master builders as it is from the elaborate manner of De l'Orme. This alone would have justified François' introduction of Serlio into France, for this broad pilaster treatment has remained, ever since, a characteristic feature of French neo-classic. Serlio also designed a house for the Cardinal of Ferrara, close to the Palace at Fontainebleau, of which the entrance only is left. The Egyptian doorway at Fontainebleau, which has also been attributed to Serlio, is almost certainly a pastiche of two terminal figures built in under the canopy of an earlier doorway. It is possible that these figures are the "Coulonnes de griz en façon de Thermes a mode antique pour l'adit peron de ladite fontaine," for superintending the models of which Primaticcio received 25 livres a month.<sup>4</sup> The only other work attributed to Serlio is the Château of Ancy-le-Franc, built before 1546.<sup>5</sup> The design of the façade to the Court resembles a plate in Serlio, "Architecture," book iv, folio lvi,<sup>6</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> These were restored in a most disastrous manner under Louis Philippe, and little idea can now be formed of the effect of the original decorations. The "Domaine de la Couronne," s.v. Fontainebleau, p. 33, says the originals were "presque entièrement détruites," and that their exact restoration was due to the "talents of MM. Alaux, Picot, and Abel de Pujol."

<sup>2</sup> Serlio, vii, Chap. XL.

<sup>3</sup> Félibien, "Entretiens," iii, 57, ed. 1725. "Si nous considérons ce que Serlio a fait à Fontainebleau dans la Cour de l'Ovale, et au vieux chateau de S. Germain-en-Laye." Félibien must, however, have been mistaken in ascribing any of the Cour de l'Ovale to Serlio, and the reason may have been that he wished to show that at that time the Italians in France were no better architects than the French; and that it was De l'Orme "qui lui [architecture] a ôté son habit Gothique, s'il faut ainsi dire, et qui nous l'a fait voir vêtue à la Grecque et à la Romaine." That Serlio did work at Fontainebleau is almost certain, but it was in the Aile de la Belle Cheminée and not in the Cour de l'Ovale.

<sup>4</sup> Comptes, i, 198.

<sup>5</sup> The date is over the garden-door at the back.

<sup>6</sup> Venetian edition of 1551.

pier for two storeys being identical. No Frenchman at the time could have prepared this refined design, with its pairs of flat pilasters separating the semicircular arches, and its obvious reminiscence of Bramante, and it is probable that Serlio did give the design of the courtyard of Ancy-le-Franc. He is also supposed to have given a design for the rebuilding of the Louvre. There is no further record of this design, but the resemblance between Lescot's design for the Louvre and the courtyard of Ancy-le-Franc makes it possible that the design which was carried out under Lescot was based on Serlio's design. The facts of later history will show that Frenchmen were absolutely determined that nobody should touch the Louvre but themselves. Serlio's brief glory ended with the death of François I, and unless we are to believe the most improbable claim that Primaticcio designed architecture as well as everything else, we have come to the end of the very scanty list of buildings which there is any convincing reason for believing to have been designed by Italians.

The fact was, that it was not till the middle of the sixteenth century that the French noblemen realized the necessity of serious and detailed designs for buildings, beyond the models prepared to the dictation of the employer. There is an ominous sentence in Du Cerceau to the effect that the King (François I) was so well versed in building that it is hardly possible to call anyone else the architect of his palaces. The amateur was, in fact, predominant; provided he had plenty of wall-space for the stucco and fresco of his ornamentalist, carving on his capitals, arabesques on his pilasters, and room to house the works of art he had looted from Italy, he felt that he was in the movement, and was satisfied that he possessed all that was possible to the best architecture in the world. He did not, in fact, understand what architecture is there to do, and the result was that capable men such as Serlio, who might have done much to lead the quick-witted French craftsmen, were checked and thwarted by the limited vision and capricious fancy of the amateur. The "amateur du premier rang," as François has been called, was not an unmixed benefit. He had no real insight into architecture and missed the lesson of the spacious simplicity of the Italian Courts. The result was that instead of architecture, he only got buildings plus ornamental details, and that French art had to follow not the best but the second best models of the Italian Renaissance.

The influence of the Italians in France on architecture so far was inconsiderable and it was practically limited to details of ornament. Their

work familiarized Frenchmen with the words of the language, but the latter had yet to learn how to put these words together. They had not yet mastered the idioms, much less the inner spirit of neo-classic architecture.

In this general survey of the Italians in France I have purposely omitted any reference to the artists maintained by François I in the Hôtel de Nesle at Paris, from 1542 to 1556, Benvenuto Cellini, "orfèvre singulier du pais de Florence," Paul Romain and Ascanius Desmarrez, Italian jewellers, and Pierre Baulduc, a German jeweller; my reason being that these artists, who were engaged on jewellery and gold, silver, and bronze work, had little or no influence on architecture. The experiment was not entirely successful. Cellini returned to Italy before 1545, without completing his work, and Paul Romain and Ascanius were called upon to account for some missing lots of silver in 1546, though in spite of this payments continued to be made to them till 1556. The accounts for the Hôtel de Nesle close in 1556.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Comptes, ii, 326-339. The Hôtel de Petit Nesle stood on the south side of the river on the site of what was afterwards the College de Quatre Nations, now the Institut,\* and is not to be confounded with that other vast Crown property known as the Hôtel de Nesle, Hôtel de Soissons, and by other names, which Catherine de Médicis pulled down in order to build on its site the last of her houses in the Quartier de S. Eustache. François I had the idea of founding a college with four chaplains in the Petit Nesle for the study of Greek. It became the quasi-official residence of artists employed at the Court, but the establishment came to an end some years before 1572, when the building was sold to the Duc de Nevers, who pulled it down. See vol. ii, p. 40.

\* See Sauval, "Antiquités de la Ville de Paris," ii, 180-184, and Piganiol de la Force, "Description Historique de la Ville de Paris," iii, 235-244, and viii, 187-191, also Dimier, "Le Primatice," 365.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MASTER BUILDERS

WITH the exception of Serlio, Il Giocondo, and Il Boccador, it is impossible to point to any Italians as having been employed as architects in France. We have now to consider the authors of the buildings decorated by the Italians: were they builders only, or architects, or both?

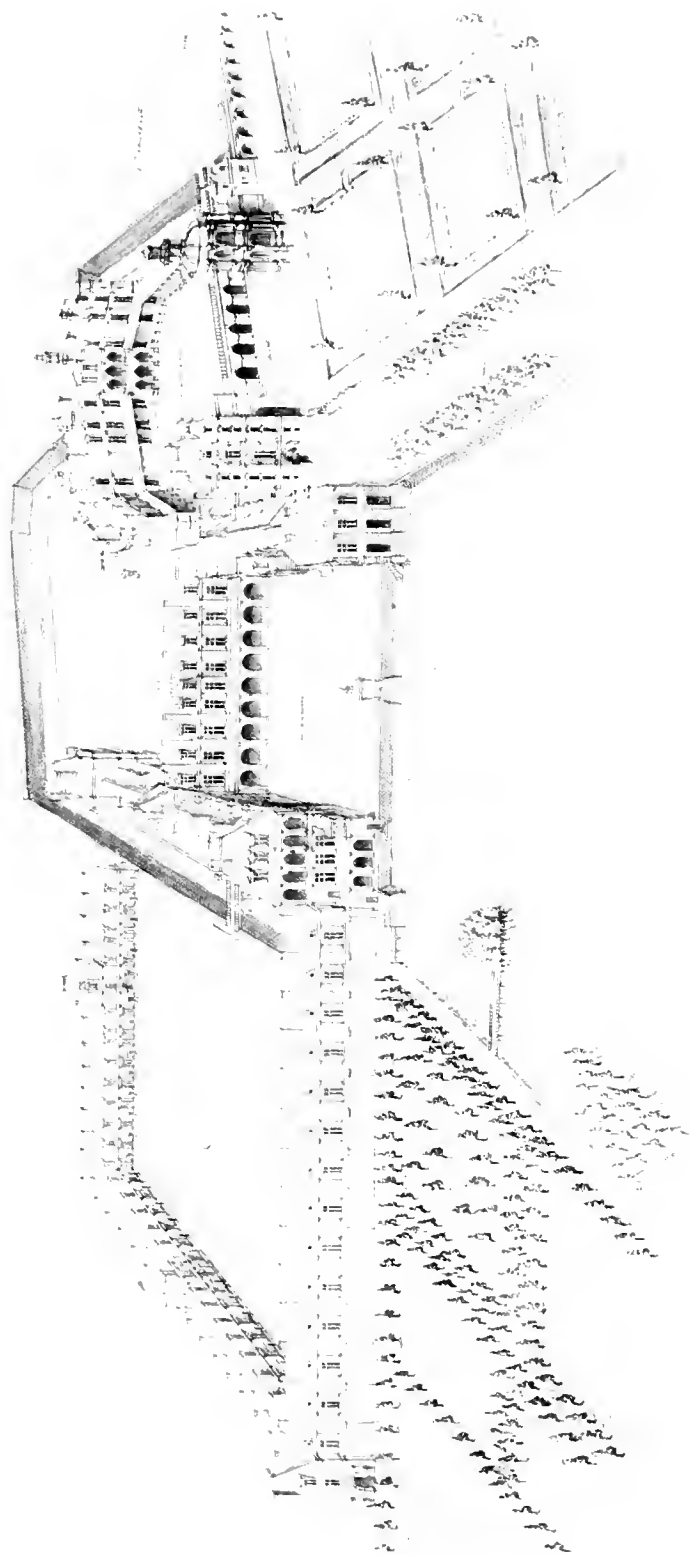
French writers are seriously at issue on the point. M. Dimier contemptuously dismisses the builders as mere workmen; whereas Palustre and his followers maintained that these builders were architects in every sense of the word. Palustre talked of Giles le Breton as "an architect who excelled in the management of the lines of his building";<sup>1</sup> and of Pierre Chambiges as in "the first rank of those architects who have resumed their rightful place among the men of genius who adorned the sixteenth century." He placed him with Jean Bullant and Philibert de l'Orme as one of the "architects who created a personal school."<sup>2</sup> Pierre Nepveu, or Trinqueau, he described as "the immortal architect of Chambord," and he wrote with enthusiasm no less exuberant of others whose only title to fame is that their names have survived in some building account.

The question is to some extent placed on a false issue owing to the introduction of the name architect with all its modern associations. Building operations in the first half of the sixteenth century were not conducted by any means as they are to-day, and before discussing the work of these men it is well to consider the actual methods of procedure followed in the time of François I. The same difficulty has attended the discrimination of "builder-designers" in England in the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries, and the evidence to be drawn from the "*Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi*" throws valuable light on this somewhat thorny question.

The first volume of the *Comptes* contains the records and entries of the buildings erected at Fontainebleau under François I and the

<sup>1</sup> Palustre, "*L'Arch. de la Renaissance*," 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.



FONTAINE-BELLEAU (Pl. 23)





method of procedure there given may be taken as typical, at any rate in regard to royal buildings.

In October 1528<sup>1</sup> François announces, to his Controller-General of Finance, that he has decided on certain buildings at Fontainebleau and in the Bois de Boulogne for his own more honourable lodgment. He has accordingly appointed Nicolas Picart as paymaster, for all expenses involved in these works as ordered by Jean de la Barre, Provost and Bailly of Paris, Nicolas de Neufville, treasurer of France, and Pierre de Balzac, Lord of Entragues, and as counter-checked by Florimond de Champeverne, "valet de chambre" in ordinary. Then follows a patent to the Board of Three Commissioners, empowering them to make all necessary contracts for the buildings at Fontainebleau, at Livry, and in the Bois de Boulogne, in accordance with the instructions given by the King to his valet de chambre, Florimond de Champeverne.<sup>2</sup> The words of the patent are "selon et ainsy que nous l'avons devisé et donné à entendre à notre cher et bien aimé valet de chambre Florimond de Champeverne." The same patent defines de Champeverne's duties. He was to conduct, distribute, and complete the work of building, he was to watch the workmen and see that they did their work promptly and well, and was to check and verify all expenses. He was to spend all his time between the three buildings, and was to receive 100 livres a month so long as the work lasted. The importance of de Champeverne's office can be measured by his salary. Il Rosso only received fifty livres a month, and thirty years later Primaticcio at the height of his reputation only received 100 livres a month. Picart also received 1,200 livres, though his pay was much in arrear (*Comptes* i, 20, 21). The valet de chambre was in fact a private secretary, and the position was much sought after by courtiers.<sup>3</sup> Nicolas Picart was to pay all charges certified by the Board of Three Commissioners, counter-checked by de Champeverne after the work had been measured and certified by the King's master-masons and carpenters.

A patent of 18th June 1532, extended the powers of De la Barre and de Neufville to the royal buildings at St. Germain-en-Laye, the Louvre, and Villers Cotterets. The Board of Three Commissioners was empowered to make all contracts in accordance with "the opinion, advice, and controls, of our dear and well-loved valets de chambre, Pierre Paule and Pierre Des Hôtels"; each of whom were to receive fifty livres a month. Champeverne died before February 1534,<sup>4</sup> and in January

<sup>1</sup> *Comptes*, i, 2, 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 7, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Lemonnier, "Hist. de France," ed. Lavissee, i, 207.

<sup>4</sup> *Comptes*, i, 50.

1535 another patent was issued to Babou de la Bourdaizière,<sup>1</sup> treasurer of France, appointing him to the "charge and superintendance" of the royal building at Chambord, Fontainebleau, Loches, Chenonceaux, and elsewhere, all of which were then in hand. The powers conferred were similar to those of de Champeverne, but extended not only to all building operations and business, but also to the furnishing, ornament and decoration of the buildings. It appears from these patents that the method of procedure was for the King himself to draw up detailed instructions, and in the carrying out of these instructions two methods seem to have been followed, either (1) the instructions were given to a court official, such as de Champeverne, who combined in himself the position of a surveyor of accounts, a clerk of the works, and a superintending architect, but had nothing to do with the design, or with making the contracts, which were made by a Board of Three Commissioners, or (2) the whole of the business administration, including the making of contracts and passing accounts, was intrusted to an important Treasury official, such as Babou de la Bourdaizière. In both cases, the work as executed had to be measured and passed as duly completed in accordance with the contracts by master tradesmen in their respective trades. There is no reference to any designs or drawings. It appears, however, that very complete specifications of works were drawn up for the contracts. The famous "Devis" (specification) of Fontainebleau is fortunately preserved in full. The specification of the masonry on which Gilles le Breton signed his contract on 28th April 1528, is some twenty-five pages long and contains about 16,500 words. It contains a complete description of the building, the numbers and sizes of rooms, the staircases, chimneys, thickness of walls, and the materials; with details such as "chapiteau de façon honneste"<sup>2</sup> architrave, frieze, corniche, et frontispiece, ainsi qu'il appartient," or in another place,<sup>3</sup> "remply des devices du Roy selon l'ordonnance de Florimond de Champeverne." Elsewhere a frieze is to be enriched with "foliages, salamandres," and other "enrichements." The old walls were to be rebuilt or adapted to the new scheme. Space was to be left for the erection of a chapel when the King thought fit.<sup>4</sup> Then follows an undertaking by Gilles le Breton, mason and stone-cutter, living at Paris, duly to perform the whole of the masonry and brickwork contained in the specifications at the prices recited in the undertaking, the work to be measured according to the use and custom of Paris."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 41.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 49. For an account of the use and custom of Paris see "Architecture

In 1534 Le Breton receives payment of the balance of his first contract, after his work had been measured by the royal master-masons in the presence of the Commissioners de Champeverne, since deceased, Pierre Paule<sup>1</sup> and Pierre des Hôtels, and been certified to be in accordance with the contract specifications.<sup>2</sup> Contracts on exactly similar lines were made with Nicolas Chastellet, carpenter of Paris, Jean Maillart, King's carpenter, with Jean aux Bœufs, roof coverer to the King, with Antoine Morisseau, smith, of Paris, with Etienne Bourdin, joiner, with Jean Chastellet, glazier, François aux Bœufs, plumber, Denis Pasquier, pavior, and Michel Vallant, fountain-man: each man contracted for his own trade, on precisely the same terms as Le Breton, and undertook to work on the building himself. Le Breton<sup>3</sup> undertakes "besogner et faire besogner et continuer en la meilleure et plus grande diligence," and Chastellet<sup>4</sup> undertakes "à ce faire dedans de main en personne avec bon et competent nombre d'ouvriers"; Etienne Bourdin agrees to carry out the joinery "en bon bois de chêne, sec, sans obier, loyal et marchand des hauteurs, largeurs et façons cy après declarez."<sup>5</sup>

After the trades follow the entries of payments to the artists and craftsmen engaged in the decoration under Il Rosso; and it appears from the accounts that the method of conducting building works described above, continued in use at any rate till Serlio's appointment as architect.

All the evidence shows that up to that date François himself took a very active part in directing the work. The instructions for the buildings at Fontainebleau are given by the King himself to de Champeverne or others. In the account of Maillart, the carpenter, payment is made to him for work done<sup>6</sup> "suivant le vouloir et commandement verbal du Roy." No French architect had as yet disentangled himself from the ranks of the master-builders, or mastered the technique of the new manner which the King and court appear to have regarded as a mystery revealed only to themselves. Such examples as the entrance inside the Cour de l'Ovale at Fontainebleau show clearly that both the King and his workmen were equally at sea in regard to architectural

Pratique," by Pierre Bullet, ed. 1780, 475-507. Also Jombert, "Architecture Moderne," 1728, ii, 1-74.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> The total amount for masonry up to February 1534 was 67,042*l*.

<sup>3</sup> Comptes, i, 46.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 66.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 82.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 71.

design. The point is not one between builder and architect, but whether, in whatever guise he might appear, master-mason or master of the works, there was any architect at all. If the building in question is finely designed the man who made the design was to all intents an architect, even if he appears in the accounts as a master-mason. If, on the other hand, it is a mere congeries of details heaped together without thought and understanding, no amount of titles would make the designer an architect. Now, in fact, in the days before De l'Orme the majority of buildings identified with the French Renaissance do not show any real architectural treatment, I fully admit that earlier work, such a house for example as Martainville, is a complete and admirable design, and there is much that is delightful in buildings such as the Manoir d'Ango, but it can hardly be said of many of the most famous buildings of François I—not of Blois or Fontainebleau, Villers-Cotterets or St. Germain. These are great agglomerations of building details which, when sifted by critical analysis, resolve themselves into a few very commonplace motives strung together without serious thought of composition, without that anxious consideration of scale which alone justifies the claim of buildings to rank as architecture. If therefore Chambiges, Jacques Coqueau, Guillaume Senault, Pierre Fain, Le Breton, Trinqureau, the Grappins, the Bacheliers and other worthies are to be considered as architects and the founders of the French Renaissance, one can only say that they were very poor architects with little sense of the possibilities of their art. I do not believe myself that they either were or were considered to be anything of the sort. They were just working builders, and the real founders of French Renaissance, or, as it should be called, French Neo-Classic architecture, were not these men, but De l'Orme and his contemporaries, who carried the art up to a certain point of development from which it advanced by slow degrees to the splendid architecture of the latter half of the seventeenth century. The evidence seems conclusive that Gilles le Breton was no more the architect of Fontainebleau than Jean Maillart the carpenter, or François aux Bœufs the plumber. He and his family, the Chambiges, and the masons whose names have been fondly recalled from oblivion, were just master tradesmen who contracted for their respective trades and worked to the instructions of their employers, eked out in some cases by models, such as those supplied by Il Boccador, or pictures by "those tricky draughtsmen" of whom De l'Orme spoke with such unmitigated contempt. That, on the other hand, these men possessed considerable traditional knowledge of building is also borne out by the evidence

even of De l'Orme himself. The astounding feats of masonry, performed in such staircases as those of Blois or Chambord, show that these builders knew their business as practical masons, and De l'Orme, in a moment of candour, admits that in his youth masons regarded the "vis St. Gilles"<sup>1</sup> as a sort of touchstone of their craft, and highly esteemed anyone who could set out and construct such a staircase. The old manner of vaulting, which these masons thoroughly understood, continued in use as late as the seventeenth century and retained its name as "la mode Française,"<sup>2</sup> and whatever one may think of the taste and intelligence of Sohier's work at Caen, for example, there is no denying its technical ability in stone cutting. Moreover, these men, by tradition and long experience of building, might be able to give a shrewd opinion on practical points of construction, and were on occasion called in for this purpose; but their knowledge was a matter of rule of thumb, and led inevitably to such disasters as the collapse of Beauvais. The guilds to which these builders belonged were no longer the guardians of the craft of building, but close corporations, jealously guarding the privileges of their trades from all intruders, and the members were much more concerned about reserving the market for themselves than they were about mutual improvement and instruction in the art of building.

As a matter of fact, the most assiduous research has discovered singularly little about these builders. The Chambiges are perhaps the most famous and the most interesting, inasmuch as they are typical of the building families, that is to say of the custom in France of son succeeding father in the same trade for several generations. The first of the family was a certain Martin Chambiges, master-mason of Paris, who in 1489 was employed by the Canons of Sens to build a transept and two doorways to the Cathedral and was at work at Sens off and on till 1499.<sup>3</sup> In that year the bridge of Notre Dame at Paris collapsed owing to the negligence of the Provost and Echevins, who were promptly thrown into prison and heavily fined for their carelessness. A council was held at the Hôtel de Ville to consider whether the bridge should be rebuilt in wood or in stone. Sauval says that

<sup>1</sup> A stone newel staircase, with a running vault.

<sup>2</sup> De l'Orme, *Architecture*, Book IV, Chap. VIII. De l'Orme used this himself in the Chapel of Vincennes.

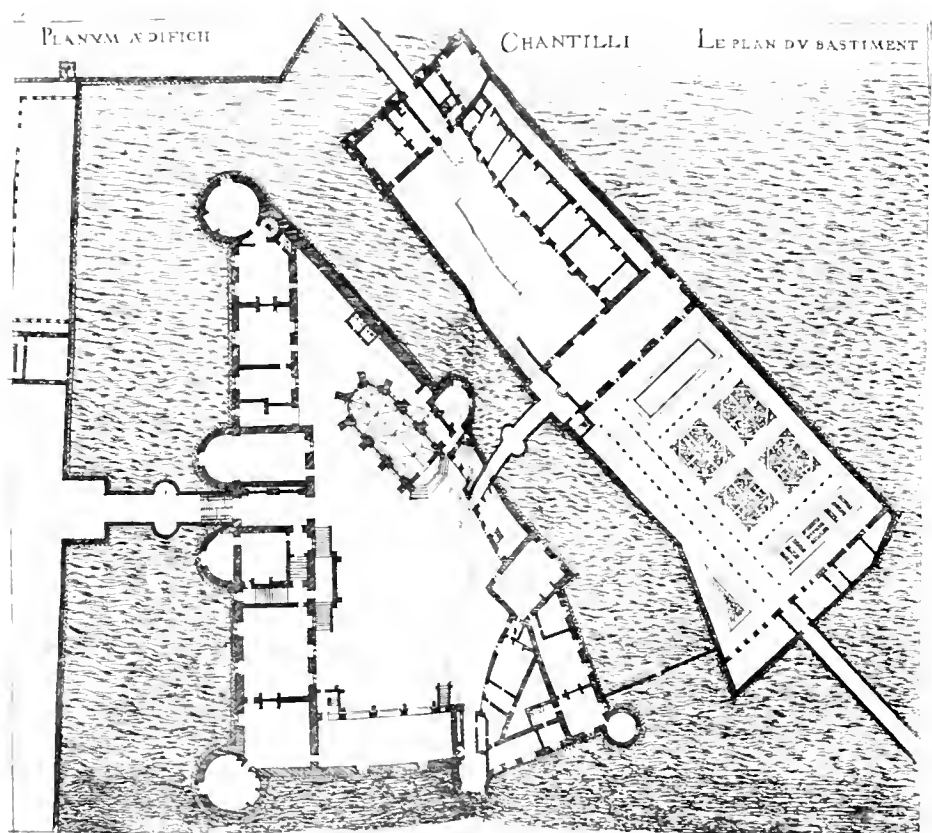
<sup>3</sup> Berty, "Les Architectes Français de la Renaissance," 139-148. This scholarly little book is a valuable antidote to the enthusiastic eloquence of patriotic French writers. Berty himself, however, yielded to the temptation to magnify the builder into the architect.

many people sent in designs for the new bridge, and that certain "Maîtres des Ponts" and "Mariniers maçons" were summoned from Blois and the Auvergne to consider these designs. Chambiges is said to have been consulted, though Sauval does not mention him, and the design of the bridge was entrusted to Fra Giocondo in 1500, under whom it was begun that year, and finally completed in 1512.<sup>2</sup> In 1506 Chambiges was employed on the choir of Beauvais, and in 1512 he was again consulted as an expert builder in regard to the foundations of the tower of the Cathedral of Troyes, and received a sum equal to about £10 for his services, and he is also said to have designed the fine fragment of the west front, a remarkable example of pure late Gothic.<sup>3</sup> Berty pronounced him one of the greatest artists and most illustrious architects of his time. But unless the attribution of the west front is accepted, it seems that Martin Chambiges was only consulted both at Paris and at Troyes on a technical point as an experienced builder, and the fate of his work at Beauvais shows that there was real ground for De l'Orme's attack on the master-masons as men without scientific knowledge, or adequate training in building. Chambiges' work at Beauvais did not stand fifty years. The dates on the building are over the south transept window, 1550, on the first bay of choir east of the crossing, 1575, and in the south aisle 1578, on the first bay south of the crossing. The building is twisted anyhow. The flying buttresses are bound round with iron bands and kept apart by iron struts and tied in with iron rods. It was time indeed that a period should be put to the reckless experiments of the master-builders. The next Chambiges was Pierre, master of works and paving in the town of Paris. In 1527, Anne de Montmorency began to rebuild Chantilly. Jean Grolier, the famous bookman, provided the specification,<sup>3</sup> and Montmorency was advised to employ "quelques maçons connoissans" to overhaul what had been already done, and he entrusted the work to Pierre Chambiges, who was employed here from 1528-31. Chambiges rebuilt a considerable part of the old castle. In 1530 Grolier was horrified to find that the roof of the new buildings rose about three feet above the tops of the old donjon, and wished to have the work lowered, the Constable's father insisted on its being left

<sup>1</sup> Sauval, i, 230, says there is no record in any of the accounts that Fra Giocondo gave the design of the bridge, and he maintains that the design was given by a certain Didier de Felin, maître des œuvres de maçonnerie de la ville, and that Fra Giocondo was only entrusted with the superintendence of the stonework.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XI for late Gothic at Troyes.

<sup>3</sup> "Chantilly et la Musée Condé," Gustave Maçon, 1910.

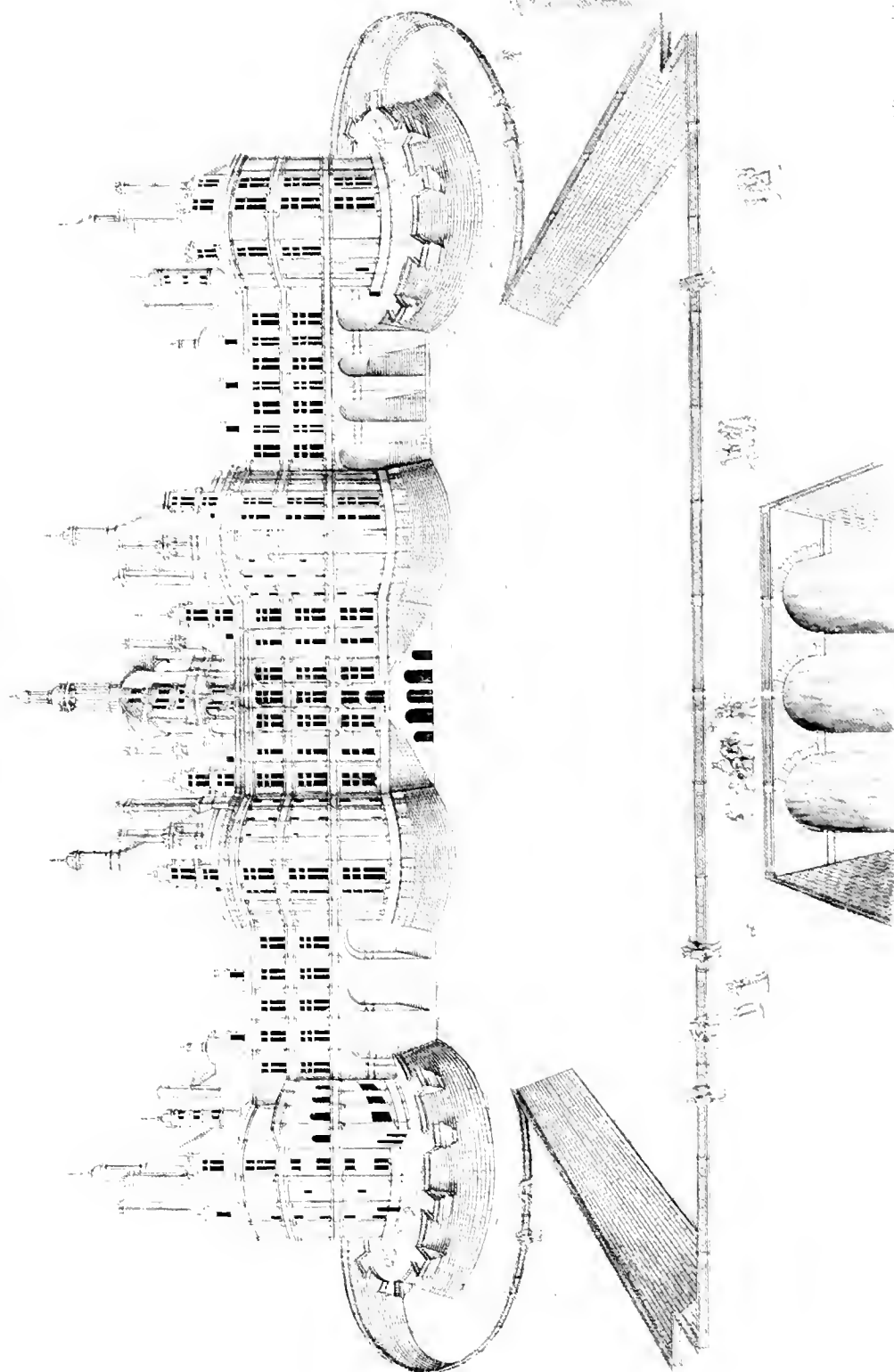


CHANTILLY: GROUND PLAN AS DRAWN BY DU CERCLAU









1970-1971

# CHALLENGE

as it was, but it is evident that nobody realized what was being done till they actually saw it up; another instance of the happy-go-lucky methods of the master-builders. We next hear of Pierre Chambiges as employed in the Hôtel de Ville at Paris with Il Boccador, and Sauval quotes an entry,<sup>1</sup> in the accounts of the Domaine de Paris, 1538-39, of payment to Pierre Chambiges, "maitre des œuvres du Roy au bailliage de Sens," for "les formes et portraits" (probably models) of certain buildings proposed by the King for the "collège des trois langues" at the Nesle in Paris. His name appears in the Comptes as "maistre maçon." In 1540 he received 70.174*l.* 8. 2.<sup>2</sup> for masonry work at Fontainebleau and St. Germain-en-Laye. In 1541 he contracted for the builder's work at La Muette, but did not live to complete it, as he died in 1544, and was succeeded by Guillaume Guillain and Jean Langeries,<sup>3</sup> master-masons of Paris. A Robert Chambiges is named as a tradesman for measuring work in 1564, and the last of the Chambiges was Pierre the second, possibly the grandson of the builder of St. Germain-en-Laye and Fontainebleau. It appears from a census of 1575<sup>4</sup> that he was then a carpenter, but in 1599 and 1602, he is described as "juré [*i.e.* expert or sworn tradesman] du Roy en l'Office de Maçonnerie" and his name occurs in accounts for work done in this capacity. In 1615 he was called in to report on the state of the vaulting of the Church of St. Pierre des Arcis in Paris, and he is supposed to have built the little gallery of the Louvre. Pierre Chambiges died in 1619. With the exception of the reference to payment for certain "formes et portraits" there is no evidence that any of the Chambiges attempted architectural design, and these "formes et portraits" were probably models made to the instruction of the employer, such as it seems to have been customary for building contractors to supply. Where M. Palustre found his evidence for the brilliant personality of Pierre Chambiges it is difficult to say. Martin Chambiges of Sens and Troyes may have been an exceptional man, but there is nothing to show that any of the Chambiges had more claim to be considered an architect than any other of the tradesmen whose names appear in the building accounts.

M. Palustre's description of Pierre Nepveu or Trinqueau as "the immortal architect of Chambord" was the more gratuitous as it appears from the entry in the "Dépenses Secrètes" of François I, already quoted, that Il Boccador supplied the models for this building and had been engaged on models for fifteen years prior to 1531. Chambord was

<sup>1</sup> Sauval, ii, 483, and iii, 621.

<sup>2</sup> Comptes, i, 154.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 222, 224.

<sup>4</sup> Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," etc., 145.

begun in 1519.<sup>1</sup> In 1531 a certain Raymond Forget<sup>2</sup> was commissary for the funds employed in the building of Chambord which were paid over quarterly to the amount of 60,000*l.* a year, and an official named the Bastard of Chavigny received an annual salary of 1,200 livres a year for regulating their expenditure<sup>3</sup> and concluding the contracts.<sup>4</sup> In 1538 "Pierre Tricqueau" (or Trinqueau) appears in the *Comptes* for the first time as "commis au conterolle des dits edifices" (ii, 247) of Chambord, that is as surveyor checking the contracts for the building, but according to Félibien (p. 31) he died on 26th August of that year. It is unfortunate that Félibien did not transcribe the account verbatim for he refers to an early payment of 27*s.* 6*d.* a day to Pierre Trinqueau "qui estoit le maître maçon, et qui avait la charge et la conduite des bastiments," and of 20*s.* to Denis Gourdeau "qui avait la conduite des traits de maçonnerie," *i.e.*, of the setting-out of the masonry. After Chambiges' death Jacques Coqueau was master-mason, and in 1556 he received his wages for preparing drawings and specifications for carpentry and masonry and superintending the work. Félibien's reference and a solitary mention of Trinqueau in the *Comptes* are surely a slender foundation on which to base a tribute to an "immortal architect." Trinqueau was master-mason and foreman of works employed to build to Il Boccador's models.<sup>5</sup> In the last year of his life he was appointed to the post of surveyor and superintendent, but in either case there is no more reason for calling him the architect of Chambord than Denis Gourdeau, who set out the masonry, or Jacques Coqueau the master mason who succeeded him. Félibien ("Mémoires," 27), says that François I had several designs prepared before he began building, and mentions the legend that it was designed by Vignola, which was clearly impossible, as Vignola did not come to France till 1540, when he was brought back from Italy by Primaticcio, and one has only to compare Chambord with Caprarola to see the essential absurdity of the story.

<sup>1</sup> *Comptes*, ii, 209.

<sup>2</sup> Félibien, "Mémoires," 30, says that M. Charles de Chauvigny, Sieur de Murat, and Raymond Forget, secretary to the Queen of Navarre were appointed in October 1526. Forget seems to have been superseded, but was again placed in charge of Chambord in 1541.

<sup>3</sup> *Comptes*, ii, 204, 216, 242.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 266.

<sup>5</sup> Félibien mentions that the wooden model of Chambord was 4 feet long, and was still in existence at Blois, though "tout rompu et gasté de pourriture." The model resembled the actual building, except in the staircase, which was quite different, and ascended by two ramps with a passage between. 444.070. 6. 4 (about half a million of our money) was spent on the building between 1526 and 1547.

One has every sympathy with the patriotic instincts of Frenchmen, with their desire to re-write history in honour of their countrymen. The attempt has been made along similar lines in our own country, and a still more serious effort has recently been made in France to resuscitate the Primitives, and claim for French painters works which are obviously Flemish in motive and technique. The position which it is sought to establish is not borne out either by the works themselves or by the documentary evidence, which in the case of the builders at any rate is clear and convincing. At the time when Gaillon, Fontainebleau, Villers-Cotterets, Chambord, Chenonceau, and most of the Loire châteaux were being built, the architect, that is the man specifically trained as a designer of buildings and possessed of expert knowledge of building methods, did not exist. It was not till the later years of the reign of François I, and as the result of increased familiarity with Italian art, that the need, or even possibility, of such a person was realized at the French court.

Except as a matter of antiquarian interest, the master masons whose names have survived in the accounts do not deserve any careful study. In 1522<sup>1</sup> Guillaume de Montmorency divided his immense property between his two sons. Anne, afterwards Constable of France, received Montmorency, Ecouen, and Chantilly, and in 1531, on the death of his father, succeeded to the properties of Beaumont sur Oise, Compiègne, l'Isle Adam, and Fère en Tardenois. His work at Chantilly I have already mentioned; on the completion of that he appears to have turned his attention to Ecouen, and probably dissatisfied with Chambiges, employed a certain Charles Billard, who carried out all the earlier work here, and remained in Montmorency's service, at any rate till after 1538, when Montmorency was appointed "Constable of France"; as in the accounts of St. Germain-en-Laye he is described as "master mason of my Lord the Constable."<sup>2</sup> In 1548 he certified to the works at St. Germain carried out by Guillaume Guillain and Jehan Langeries, in accordance with their contract of 1544,<sup>3</sup> and about the same time he was called in to certify to the work of Gilles le Breton at Fontainebleau,<sup>4</sup> in accordance with instructions given him by Philibert de l'Orme. He appears to have died about 1550, and was succeeded by Jean Bullant, who introduced an entirely fresh motive into his buildings, and whose work shows very clearly the difference

<sup>1</sup> Maçon, "Chantilly et le Musée Condé," 27.

<sup>2</sup> Comptes, i, 224.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 294-6, 302, 305.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 211.

between the builders of the first part of the sixteenth century and the trained architects who succeeded them.<sup>1</sup>

Palustre called Gilles le Breton one of "the great architects of the sixteenth century," but continued "le talent de Gilles le Breton est en réalité fort contestable, si cet architecte brille parfois dans l'agrément des lignes, dans l'habilité à tirer parti de certaines conditions désavantageuses, il manque trop souvent dans l'ornementation de cette abondance et de cette grâce sans lesquelles on a peine à concevoir la Renaissance du temps de François I."<sup>2</sup> It is implied in this passage that Le Breton was the architect of Fontainebleau. The building itself and the documentary evidence disprove this assumption. In regard to the building itself, the work which François I undertook at Fontainebleau was the alteration and re-modelling of a much older building. He himself gave instructions as to what was to be done. Models were supplied by the court model-makers, for any parts requiring special care, if not for the whole building. As to general treatment, the builders followed their traditional methods, and their turrets and chimneys and high slate roofs resulted in a pile of buildings which is picturesque and attractive when coloured by time, but is destitute of serious pretensions to architectural design. It is seldom that one comes across that breadth of treatment, that strenuous purpose, which gives such force and dignity to many a mediaeval castle. The "agrément des lignes," in which Palustre supposed Le Breton to excel, amounts to little more than those happy accidents of outline which give a certain charm to most of the châteaux of the time of François I. Turning to the Comptes, we find Gilles le Breton described as "maçon, tailleur de pierre, demeurant à Paris." He contracted for all the masonry work at Fontainebleau in 1528, and was at work there, on successive contracts, from that year till at any rate the accession of Henri II. He appears to have died about the year 1550; as in 1552 a patent was issued appointing "Jean de Lorme," then in Italy, to succeed the late Gilles le Breton in the office of Master Mason to the King.<sup>3</sup> Two other Le Bretons, Jacques and Guillaume, brothers, appear in the accounts as masons employed between 1532 and 1540 at Villers-Cotterets,<sup>4</sup> where they seem to have carried out the whole of the masonry. Guillaume was employed as a master mason in the Louvre, and died before 1559. A fourth of the family, Jean, appears

<sup>1</sup> See chap. VI for a more detailed account of Ecouen.

<sup>2</sup> Palustre, "Arch. de la Renaissance," 177-8.

<sup>3</sup> Comptes, i, 272, 274.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 142, 227.

frequently in the accounts as a roof-coverer, at Fontainebleau and elsewhere. There can be little doubt that the le Bretons were a family of building tradesmen, and in the opinion of Philibert de l'Orme at any rate, they were not particularly good ones.<sup>1</sup> In his famous defence he describes how he found that the workmen at Fontainebleau, Villers Cotterets, St. Germain, and elsewhere, "and M. Jehan le Breton," mason, had received 18,000 livres more than the value of the work they had done, and that there was work for which some 80,000 livres was claimed which was worth nothing at all. The master builders were by no means impeccable. Two or three years ago I examined the masonry at Chambord. The setting-out of the staircase is of course a memorable feat, but the actual masonry in the tower and chimneys is careless and slovenly work, such as one would not think of accepting from a good modern builder. There was the less excuse for such work in that the stone is an admirable free-stone, as easily dressed as clunch.

An interesting fact emerges from these records, and that is the custom of son succeeding father in the building trades; the same names constantly recur in building accounts, and there evidently existed a well-defined class of building contractors with whom the business was hereditary. The generations of the Chambiges extend from the fifteenth to the early seventeenth century. The le Bretons and the Grappins of Gisors,<sup>4</sup> or the Bacheliers of Toulouse, are other examples. A little later come the famous families of the Metezeau and the Androuets du Cerceau, and there is evidence that these families were on intimate terms. Pierre Chambiges, in 1568, was godfather at Ecouen to a son of Jean Bullant.<sup>2</sup> Guillaume Guillain married a relation (cousin, or more probably sister) of Pierre Chambiges.<sup>3</sup> It was in this way that building traditions accumulated, and were handed on from father to son, and when the real Renaissance in architecture came, there were skilful masons and tradesmen already broken in to the technicalities of the new manner.

The men to whom I have referred were, then, at their best competent building tradesmen, men who not only contracted for work, but worked with their own hands in the shops and on the building; but who, so far as it can be ascertained, did not in any way fill the rôle that was played by Bullant and De l'Orme a generation later. All the "travaux de choix" in domestic work, at any rate in the time of

<sup>1</sup> "Instruction de M. d'Yvry, dit de l'Orme," Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," 51.

<sup>2</sup> Berty, 147.

<sup>3</sup> In the church of St. Gervais at Paris there were memorial tablets to Chambiges and Guillain and their wives.

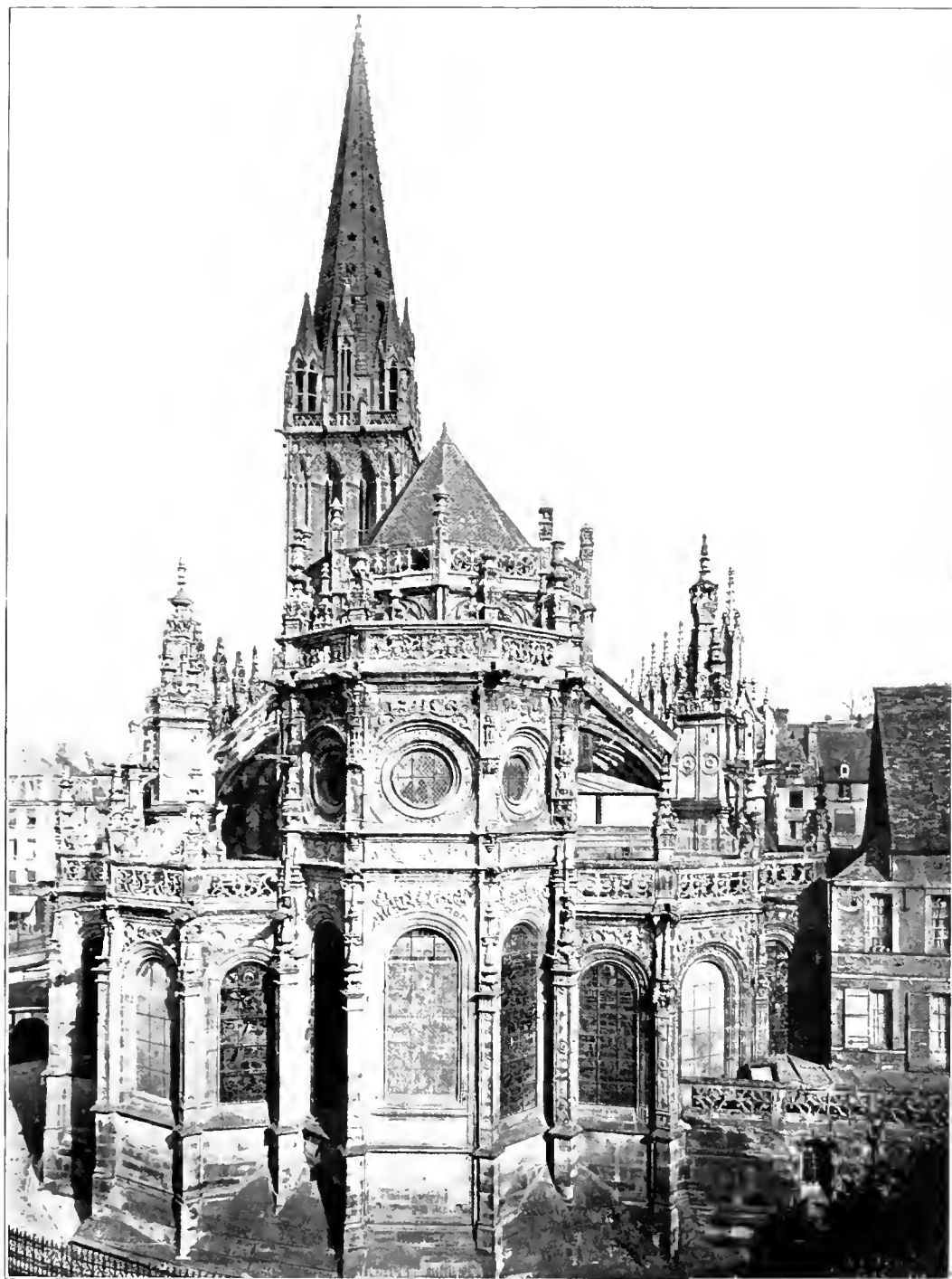
<sup>4</sup> For an account of the Grappins, see vol. ii, p. 9.

François I, were executed by Italians, or by French workmen under Italian direction. An exception should, however, be made in the case of church work. Here the custom of the Middle Ages was maintained, the building and its ornament being undertaken by the same men. The two or more generations of Grappins who worked on the church of S. Gervais and S. Protais at Gisors from 1497 to 1581 were master masons, and are so described in the accounts; so were the Lemerriers of Pontoise, but in both cases, and certainly in the case of the Grappins, some of the carving, including figures, was contracted for and executed by these men, and there are men such as Hector Sohier of Caen, Nicholas Bachelier of Toulouse, and Hugues Sambin of Dijon, for whom it is claimed that they were both architects and sculptors. Their work was extremely elaborate, and covered with a profusion of carving. The choir of St. Pierre at Caen is a well-known instance of Sohier's work; and of this Palustre remarked:<sup>1</sup> "L'exuberance s'allit au goût le plus exquis." The choir of St. Pierre is indeed a touchstone of quite different views of the nature and function of architecture. Writers of the last century conceived of architecture mainly as an affair of ornament tacked on to building; a beautiful capital, a rich pilaster, seems to have thrown them off their balance, and blinded them to any defects or absurdities in the building itself. The qualities of pure architecture, mass and proportion, selection and restraint, the faculty of conceiving of a building as a whole, of thinking in masses rather than in details, made little if any appeal to these critics. To this school, the choir of St. Pierre at Caen has always seemed a masterpiece. Scarcely an inch of surface was left undecorated, indeed it is prickly with ornament. But students of architecture who value the qualities I have attempted to indicate will not find Sohier's work at St. Pierre satisfactory or convincing. Everywhere there is an abundance of carving of great delicacy of execution but uncertain taste. In regard to the construction, with the exception of the coffered vaults, there is no trace of Renaissance motives, the plan, the groining, the methods of dealing with the thrust of the vaulting, are simply variations of the ordinary late Gothic type. On the outside, the centre chapel is carried up as an octagonal tower above the adjoining chapels, and the effect of this, together with the elaborate pinnacles of the flying buttresses and the interminable ornament, is restless and bewildering in the last degree. It is the work of an ornamentalist, not of an architect.<sup>2</sup> Lasson, near Caen, and

<sup>1</sup> "Arch. de la Renaissance," 181.

<sup>2</sup> The dates in the north-west chapels are 1518 and 1530.





*A. N. P. photo*

ST. PIERRE: CAEN (P. 34)  
(H. SOHIER, ARCHITECT)



GALLERY. HÔTEL D'ASSEZAT, TOULOUSE (P. 35)

Chanteloup (Manche) are also attributed to Sohier,<sup>1</sup> who appears to have died about the middle of the sixteenth century, leaving this tradition of a great name for the bewilderment of students and his building as a type of what is most popular and least to be admired in the whole range of modern architecture.

Nicholas Bachelier of Toulouse has been described as one of the great names of the earlier French Renaissance: "Suivant une légende vieille de deux cents ans un seul homme, Nicholas Bachelier à la fois architecte et sculpteur, aurait imprimé au mouvement sa direction et mis la main aux œuvres les plus différentes."<sup>2</sup> So different, indeed, that they range from the entrance of the Dalbade to the splendid Pont Neuf at Toulouse. Unfortunately the legend has little evidence behind it. The authenticated facts are these: in 1538 Bachelier, with another mason, Lescale, contracted with Jean de Bragas, lawyer of Toulouse, to build him the original "maison de Pierre"<sup>3</sup> in that city. In 1547 he made a *flèche* for the Dalbade which was destroyed three years later. He contracted for a retable for the Church of the Daurade (Toulouse),<sup>4</sup> built the Porte de la Commutation, and part of the Porte de l'Esquilin, prepared the "portrait" for the Château de Jouy near Toulouse, now in ruins, and drew up the articles of contract between Jehan de Castanie, mason, and Pierre d'Assezat, merchant of Toulouse, for building the Hôtel d'Assezat. The work was inspected and taken over by Dominique, son of Nicholas Bachelier, in 1557. On one occasion only Nicholas is described as "architecteur de la Ville de Tolose," but his regular title was "maitre maçon et tailleur de pierre." How the legend of his genius grew it is difficult to say, probably through the efforts of industrious local antiquaries, who, finding a name mentioned in some account, treat it as a peg on which to hang all the unclaimed work of the same period in the district, without regard to wide discrepancies of design in the buildings so classified. M. Vachon gratuitously describes the Hôtel d'Assezat as "un création de N. Bachelier," and attributes to him the façades of the courtyard. But the work is not all of one date, and a careful examination of the building led me to think that the orders above orders, and the well-known gallery at the end of the court, are seventeenth century remodellings of an earlier building. Recent research has limited Bachelier's work to two doorways, an early

<sup>1</sup> Palustre, "Arch. de la Renaissance," 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

<sup>3</sup> Refaced and much altered in 1611.

<sup>4</sup> See C. Drouais, "L'Art à Toulouse matériaux pour servir à son histoire du XVe au XVIIIe Siècle."

sixteenth-century gateway known as the "Porte de la Commutation," which has been set up in the Botanical Gardens, and the entrance to the College of the Esquilins. Even here we are met by the difficulty that the gateway in the Botanical Gardens is of the crudest and most ignorant character, both in design and execution, whereas the entrance to the Esquilins, though not very interesting, is well designed, and has a delicately executed frieze of masks and cartouches in the entablature, which could hardly have been done before the end of the sixteenth century, and which is related to that interesting and accomplished school of architectural sculpture which existed in Toulouse at that date, to which I shall return later. Which of the two works are we to take as typical of his work? If the gateway of the Botanical Gardens, Bachelier was no artist and an indifferent builder; if that of the Esquilins, he is on a different plane, a designer of much refinement, and a sculptor of ability. There is a third solution, that Bachelier was just a builder working to designs supplied by others. If, as seems to be agreed, the Porte de la Commutation is an authentic work, Nicholas Bachelier, instead of being the genius of the south, which the enthusiasm of French writers led us to expect, becomes a provincial mason, whose technique was about on a level with that of an Elizabethan builder in England. Hugues Sambin is a more interesting figure.<sup>1</sup> He was born either at Talant near Dijon, or at St. Claude, in the Jura mountains, about 1520. His father was a joiner and cabinet-maker. Hugues succeeded him and became "maître juré" of the Guild of Menuisiers in 1553-4-6, and 1560. He seems to have been employed by the municipality of Dijon as a borough surveyor, for he built them a slaughter-house, a drinking-place, and windmills, diverted their river, and looked to their fortifications. In 1564 he organized the decorations of the town for the entry of Charles IX, and it is possible that some of the motives used on that occasion are illustrated in his book of "Termes." This rare book was printed at Lyons. It contains a dedication to the Sieur de Chabot, son of the Admiral, a sonnet in which Sambin is described by the author as "la perle de nostre aage," and eighteen plates of terminal figures of the most astonishing description. Sambin in fact was developing into a designer in general, out of his trade of cabinet-making and wood-carving. There is a good deal of his work still existing at Dijon, where he was held in great esteem, and where, there is no doubt, he exercised a considerable and somewhat injurious influence on the

<sup>1</sup> See "Hugues Sambin, sculpteur sur Bois, et Architecte," Bernard Prost, *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1892, i, 123.



*See note 10 in text*

HÔTEL D'ASSEZAT: TOULOUSE (p. 35)





1.  $\frac{1}{x} = x^{-1}$   $\Rightarrow \frac{d}{dx} x^{-1} = -x^{-2} = -\frac{1}{x^2}$   $\Rightarrow \frac{d}{dx} \frac{1}{x} = -\frac{1}{x^2}$

 $(K^*, K)$ 

FOURTH DISCUSSIONS: FOURTH SET (P. 36)





architecture of the town. On the other hand, Sambin was a capable carver. He is supposed, on somewhat doubtful evidence, to have carved the "Last Judgment" over the centre entrance of the west front of the Church of St. Michael at Dijon; the treatment is pictorial and confused, but the carving itself is skilful. His best work is to be found in certain carved doors of walnut in the Museum, and in the walnut wood screens to the Chapel of the Palais de Justice.<sup>1</sup> Here he has formed the balusters as caryatides with Egyptian head-dresses carrying baskets of fruit and flowers, and a modified version of the same motive is given on Plate VI of his book. In 1581 he designed the Town Hall of Besançon, a façade with somewhat pretentious detail, but little claim to architectural excellence. In 1592 he designed a rood-loft at Dole, and three years later was employed in fortifying Salins to resist Henri IV. He died in 1602. Judged by the evidence of his book and his authenticated work at Dijon and at Besançon, Sambin was a good carver, but a bad designer. His abundant and intricate detail is not superior to that of the regular French Renaissance work of the sixteenth century, and his architectural design has lost the charm of the earlier manner without any compensating excellence of technique. He is typical of the tradesman and ornamentalist who blossomed out as an architect without adequate training, and was accepted as such by an ill-informed popular taste. In referring to his work I have had to deviate from strict chronological order, but Hugues Sambin belongs, in method and attainment though not in date, to the generation that preceded the trained French architects of the second half of the sixteenth century.

The evidence is, on the whole, conclusive that the practice of building in the earlier part of the sixteenth century still followed in the main the mediaeval method; that is, the builder received somewhat minutely detailed instructions, as to general plan and elevation, but was left to his own devices for details of execution. This appears to have been the practice in most of the great houses of François I. Though in certain cases, as already noted, the "tailleur et imagineur" emerges as "maître des œuvres" in charge of the works, including the ornamentation, as a rule his duties were limited to the masonry. That is to say, when he had built his wall, and perhaps "boasted" the stone to the rough planes required by the carver, he withdrew from the work and the ornamentalist was left free to do what he liked; the result is the

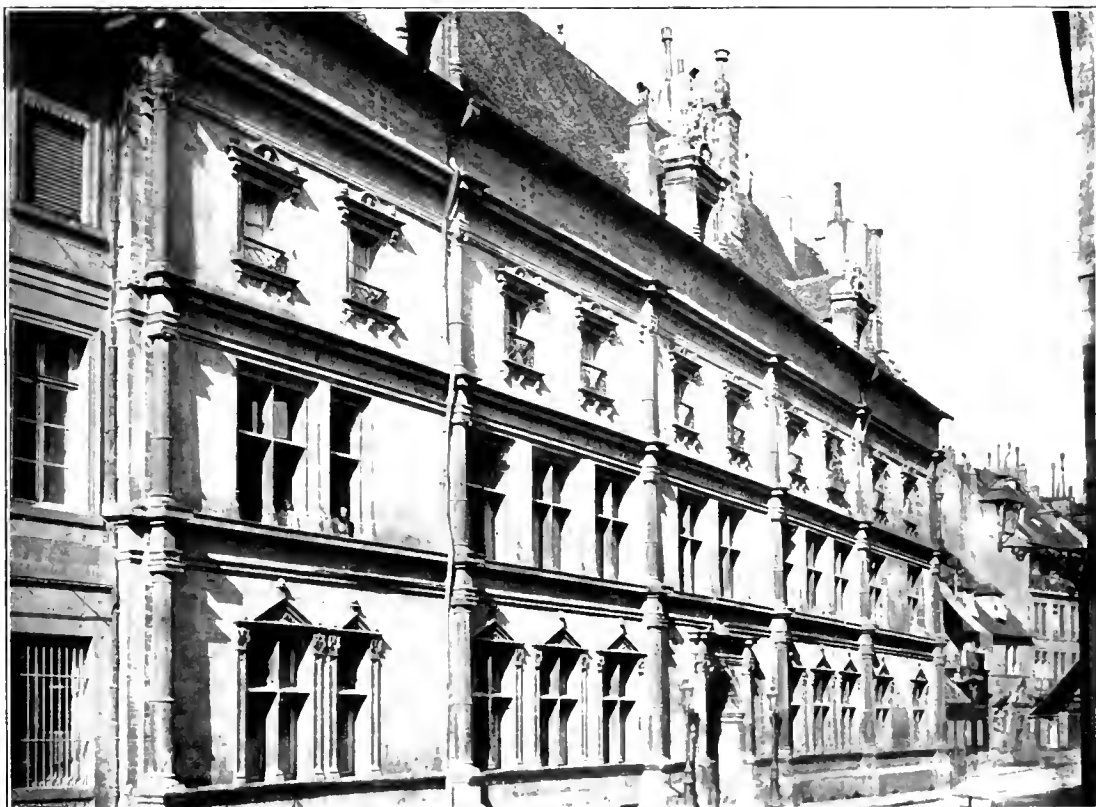
<sup>1</sup> The old Parliament house of Dijon.

curious mixture of the two traditions found in the early Renaissance: the builder following the mediaeval tradition so far as he was allowed to, the ornamentalist turning his back on that tradition, and covering everything that he could with reminiscences of what he had learnt in Italy. The effect is often fascinating, but it is due to accident, and modern attempts that have been made to revive this phase of design have always ended in failure, because the conditions under which the earlier work grew up no longer exist. The *naïveté* of modern detail is so self-conscious that it can only end in affectation. Salamanders and ermines, swans transfixéd with darts, the heads of Roman emperors in medallions, porcupines, and fleurs-de-lis were all very well when kings had these badges to set about on their buildings, and when the enthusiasm for the antique was genuine, if at once rather childish and pedantic: but to reproduce these symbols under the totally different conditions of modern architecture is as inexcusable as the follies of the Gothic revivalist. Moreover, the happy accidents of the master builders were not architecture. They were not integral parts of a rythmical design conceived as such from the first, and it is simply misleading to treat their work as on all fours with that of the trained and specialized men who succeeded them. Among all the names that the industry of French archaeologists has collected from records and tradition, it is not possible to point to a single Frenchman who can fairly be considered an architect as we now understand the term, prior to the death of François I, and the appearance of Philibert de l'Orme and his contemporaries. There were masons, carpenters, and joiners, workers in all the trades, model makers such as Il Boccador, imagers and ornamentalists such as the Justes, but the man who had from the first devoted himself to the theory and practice of architecture, had not yet appeared on the stage.

I have devoted myself in this chapter to the somewhat ungrateful task of iconoclasm, and have endeavoured to represent the master builders, not with the halo of romance that attaches itself to the forgotten artist who enters at length on his birthright, but in the sober dress of history, as plain men who made their living by the more or less skilful exercise of the building trades. Documentary evidence nowhere warrants the assumption that they were architects in the modern sense of the term, that is, skilled artists in building. Neither is that assumption justified by their buildings. These men had the misfortune to live in an age of transition, when the old tradition was failing and the new had not taken its place, and they themselves had not the know-



DOOR OF SCREEN: PALAIS DE JUSTICE, DIJON (P. 37)  
(ATTRIBUTED TO HUGUES SAMBRI)



HÔTEL DE VILLE, BESANCON (P. 37)  
(HUGUES SAMBRI)

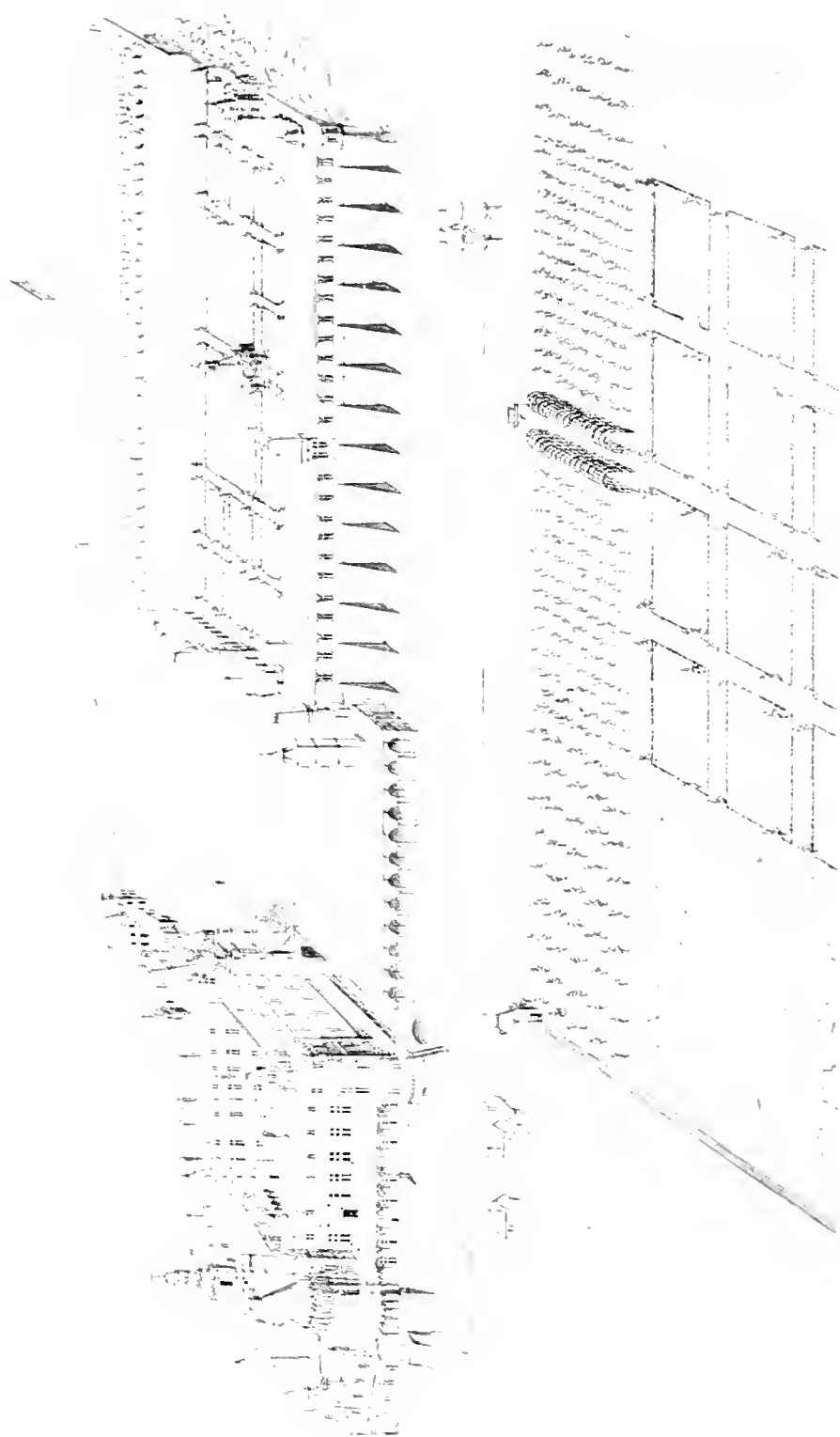


ledge nor the ability necessary to make a definite stand either for the old ways or the new. The results are seen in the uncertainty and caprice of their work, in the absence of any ruling principle of architecture such as could convert this chaos of details into organic design. Nor can historical associations have any bearing whatever on this criticism of architecture. The charm of detail, the wealth of associations, their very placing on the banks of the most beautiful river in Europe, have made the châteaux of the Loire famous throughout the world, have indeed made them appear to some to be the last word of the French Renaissance. That is a dangerous delusion, because at the root of it lies a fatal misconception of architecture. A cool and critical study of these buildings will show that they are not the last word of a consummate art, but the half articulate efforts of beginners striving to express themselves in an unfamiliar language.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NEW MANNER AND FRANÇOIS I

SO far as documentary evidence goes there is nothing to show that the master-builders either were, or even claimed to be, architects. We have now to consider the internal evidence of their buildings. Can we find any consecutive architectural idea expressing itself in these houses and palaces, any trace of a strong personality that left its mark on everything that it handled? or shall we find that mere aggregation of details which reveals the absence of the master mind, and speaks to the work of the builder and the tradesman, rather than the artist? A careful study of the actual buildings, in spite of the lavish eloquence with which writers have described their charm, will show that in fact they exactly represent the transition through which not only the architecture but the whole intellectual life of France was passing. In regard to their architectural pretensions they can only be regarded as so much material, rich in potentialities of future development, but as yet without coherence, and we shall look in vain among their builders for the man of genius who was to bring order out of chaos. The first fifty years of the sixteenth century, roughly speaking, cover the period of transition. On that fateful day in August 1494, when Charles VIII set out from Paris on his first Italian expedition, he aimed in all innocence at the recovery of Naples and the conquest of Italy. The result, for himself and his successors, was to be far otherwise. Italy was lost to France, but the culture of the Renaissance and the splendours of Italian art were revealed to her, and the days of medievalism in France were numbered. Hard things have been said of François I both as a king and as a man, yet so far as his uncertain temperament allowed him, he had caught the spirit of the Humanists, and his enthusiasm for literature and the arts was genuine and practical. It is said that on his death five thousand students and artists fled from Paris; meanwhile the artists and scholars of France had learnt to stand by themselves, and it was to François I that they owed the opportunity of the lesson.



CAUTION (P. 41)





With notable exceptions in the seventeenth century, the Renaissance in France, and by this I mean Neo-Classic architecture, found itself mainly in civil and domestic buildings. The churches and cathedrals were already built, towers and chapels might be added, but it is not here, at any rate in the sixteenth century, that we should look for the main development of architecture. Indeed, as in other countries, mediaeval methods lingered on in church building long after they had been abandoned everywhere else. But in his house and garden the French nobleman could attempt to realize what he had admired in Italy; nor was he slow to make the attempt. Gaillon, the first and most notable effort in the new manner, was begun in 1501-2, by Georges d'Amboise,<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Archbishop of Rouen, and minister of Louis XII. D'Amboise was typical of the new man of the sixteenth century, scholar, ecclesiastic, and statesman; a man of great intellectual activity and suppleness, he became the most prominent person in France, and almost in Europe, in the first ten years of the sixteenth century. For a Frenchman of that time he knew Italy well, and it was only to be expected that when he built himself a house, it should be on the scale of a palace, and should set out to be an object-lesson of the new ideas to the court of Louis XII. He selected for his purpose the château of Gaillon in Normandy, on rising ground overlooking the Seine; a building which had been altered and added to in 1456-63 by Cardinal d'Estouteville, d'Amboise's predecessor in the archbishopric of Rouen. Apparently he rebuilt on the foundations of d'Estouteville's building, failing to realize that this alone was fatal to his dream of an Italian palace. The older building was pulled down, but the foundations were left. In consequence of this, the regularity of Italian models was abandoned at the start, and the mediaeval tradition, reinforced perhaps by motives of economy, maintained its ground triumphantly. D'Amboise, as happened again and again in the buildings of this and the succeeding reign, was deceived in the matter. He imagined he was building an Italian palace, what he really got was a late Gothic house profusely decorated with Italian Renaissance detail. No attempt was made to preserve a symmetrical arrangement. The lofty entrance tower did not range with the tower over the garden door, and only the north and west sides of the court were rectangulated. The chapel which stood at the west end of the south front was ordinary late Gothic in design, with a very lofty

<sup>1</sup> Deville, "Comptes de dépenses de la construction du Château de Gaillon," XV. Gaillon was only completed in 1509, a year before the death of d'Amboise, who, according to Deville, only visited it a dozen times in his life.

lantern in two stories constructed above the crossing. It is characteristic of the time that in spite of its Italian details, the building should have followed so completely the traditional French manner. Du Cerceau says:<sup>1</sup> "Le château est fort bien bâti, de bonne manière et d'un riche artifice, toutefois moderne, sans trace de l'antiquité, sinon en quelques particularitez qui depuis y ont été faites." "Moderne" of course with du Cerceau means late Gothic. No architect was employed. The legend of Giocondo has long since been exploded: "Les artistes d'outre monts n'y furent occupés qu'à des travaux secondaires et de simple ornamentation."<sup>2</sup> The builders were Frenchmen, the principal masons being Guillaume and François Senault, Pierre Fain, "Et ses compagnons à present besognans au château de Gaillon," Toussaint and Pierre de l'Orme.<sup>3</sup> The artists employed for the details of ornament were Italians. The only important sculpture by a Frenchman was the frieze of St. George and the Dragon over the entrance to the chapel, by Michel Colombe.<sup>4</sup> Guido Pagenin carved the medallions of the emperors placed on the walls of the court. Jerome Pachet of Amboise, Bertrand de Myenal of Genoa, and Jean Chersalle, were employed in the marble work. Antoine Juste carved the figures in the chapel, and Laurent de Mugiano the statues of Louis XII, the Cardinal and his nephew.<sup>5</sup> The chapel was decorated by Solario, and the intarsia work of the stalls was executed by Richard Guerge or Carpe, one of the intarsiatores of Carpi, another of whom, Francisque, is constantly mentioned in the *Compte des Bâtimens*, in connection with work at Fontainebleau. With the possible exception of Solario, none of the Italians employed can be regarded as first-rate men. M. Dimier<sup>6</sup> talks rather loosely of the Cardinal's having desired to build a house "comme les Italiens seuls en avaient alors;" but it is quite plain that the Cardinal's ideas of an Italian palace did not rise beyond the arabesques of its orna-

<sup>1</sup> "Les plus excellens Bastimens en France," vol. i, Gaillon.

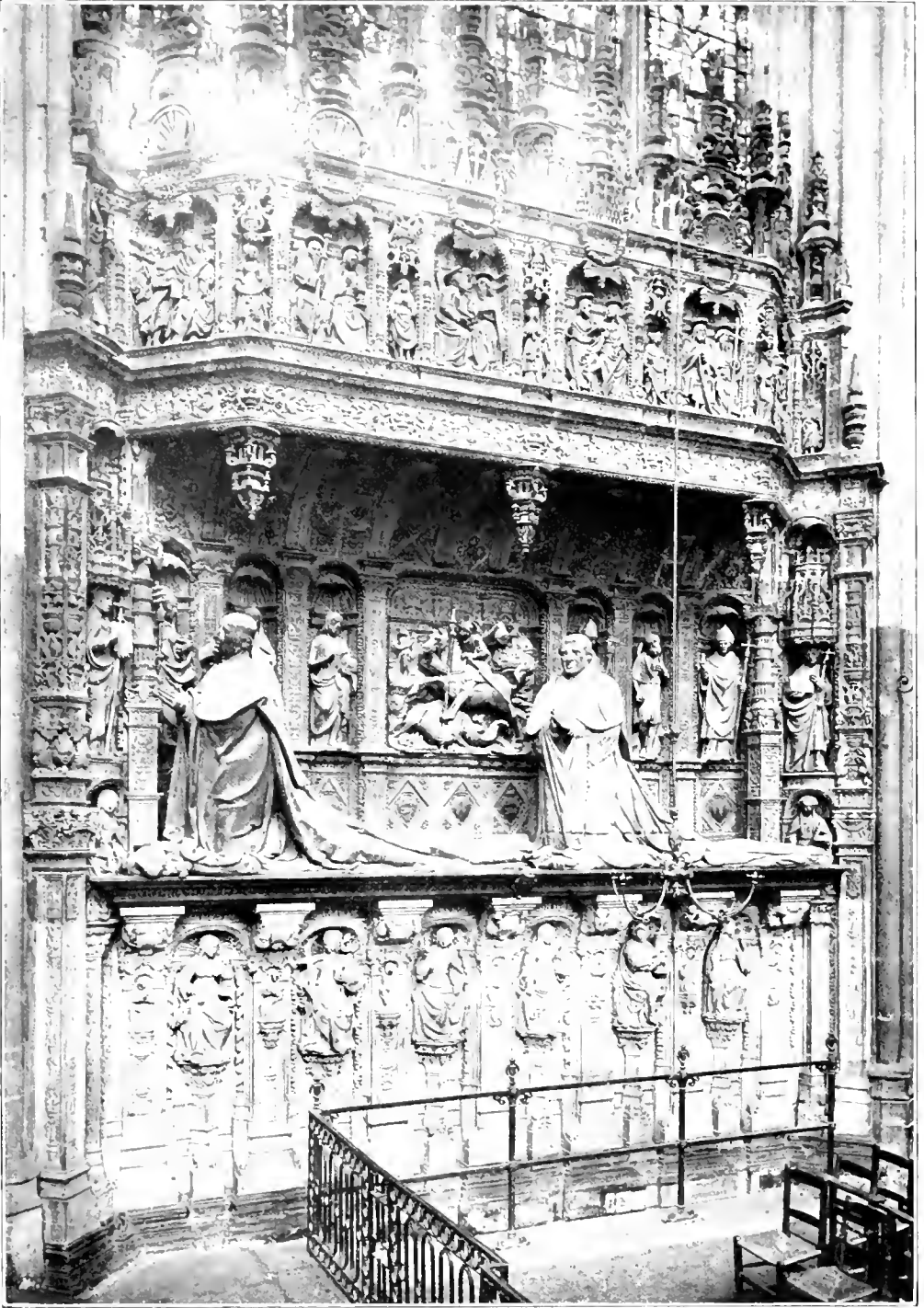
<sup>2</sup> See Deville, "Comptes de dépenses," etc., XIII.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* M. Deville put the total cost (1497-1509) at 153,600 livres, which he considered equal to 2,764,800 francs in modern money. In 1792 the Convention decreed the sale of Gaillon. Certain protests were silenced by the report of the engineer, that its architecture was Gothic and of no account. The château was demolished, though a few fragments now in the courtyard of the Ecole des Beaux Arts were saved by Lenoir. Finally, in 1812, Napoleon converted what was left into a prison for the departments of Eure, Somme, Seine Inférieure, Orme, and Eure-et-Loire, and Deville, writing in 1850, says: "A peine aujourd'hui en reste-il debout quelques pans de murailles, quelques restes des-honorées."

<sup>4</sup> Now in the Louvre.

<sup>5</sup> See Deville, CXXVI.

<sup>6</sup> See Dimier, "Le Primatice," 17, 18.



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TOMB OF CARDINAL AMBOISE: ROUEN CATHEDRAL (P. 43)



ment. Solario was sent from Milan in 1507 to paint the chapel, and was at work till 1509. His wages were 15s. 5*d.* a day with allowances for his horse and man, and it is suggestive of the condition of painting in France at the time, that some of his pigments such as "azur" had to be sent from Venice.

George d'Amboise died in 1510, the year after Gaillon was finished. About ten years after his death his nephew raised a sumptuous monument to his memory in the Cathedral at Rouen. This is the monument that everyone admires. Almost opposite to it is the monument to Louis de Brezé. A comparison of the two shows how merely superficial had been the influence of the Italian work at Gaillon. The Amboise monument is one of the most elaborate in France. It is of great size, and consists of a pedestal supporting a slab on which are the kneeling figures of the Cardinal and his nephew, over life size. Above is a horizontal canopy with an elaborate cresting. The entire surface is covered with carving. Niches with figures large and small, pilasters with arabesques and balusters, capitals, friezes, every possible ornament that the sculptor could think of, are lavished here in profusion, the workmanship is most skilful, the actual masonry and construction of marvellous ingenuity. But there is no trace of the selection, the cool reticence which marks the best Italian work, and, in spite of its Renaissance detail, this monument seems to me the final effort of the ornamentalist, rather than of the artist and the sculptor. The tomb of Louis de Brezé is attributed wrongly to Jean Goujon. There are faults of design here, the use of the orders is rather pedantic, but French art has far to travel before it will arrive at this power of concentrating detail, this reliance on broad and simple effects rather than on accumulated ornament. The Amboise monument was carried out between 1520 and 1525, and with one exception all the men employed were Frenchmen.<sup>1</sup> In spite of, or probably because of, its extreme gorgeousness, it impresses one with the conviction that the

<sup>1</sup> The sculpture was by P. Desobaulx, Regnaud Therouyn, Jean Chaillon, André le Flament, Matthieu Laignée, and Jean de Rouen, under the direction of Roullant Leroux. The ornament was gilt on an azure ground, and the statues were painted by Richard Duhay and Leonard Feschal. (Deville, "Tombeaux de la Cathédral de Rouen.") In 1541 George d'Amboise the younger substituted for the single figure on the slab two kneeling figures, the new figure being executed by Goujon; but by his last will in August 1550, Goujon's figure was removed and the existing second figure in cardinal's robes set up in its place. Leroux was employed at Gaillon in the carriage of the marble of the fountain sent from Italy. See Deville, p. 313. It appears from a note in Philander's *Vitruvius* (Paris, 1545, p. 357) that it was Georges d'Amboise the younger who induced Philander to write his commentary and helped him in the work in 1540.

Cardinal and his men had not yet learnt the lesson of the Renaissance. The tomb of René II (about 1520) in the Church of the Cordeliers at Nancy is an example from Lorraine showing the same instinct for elaborate detail with little sense of design as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

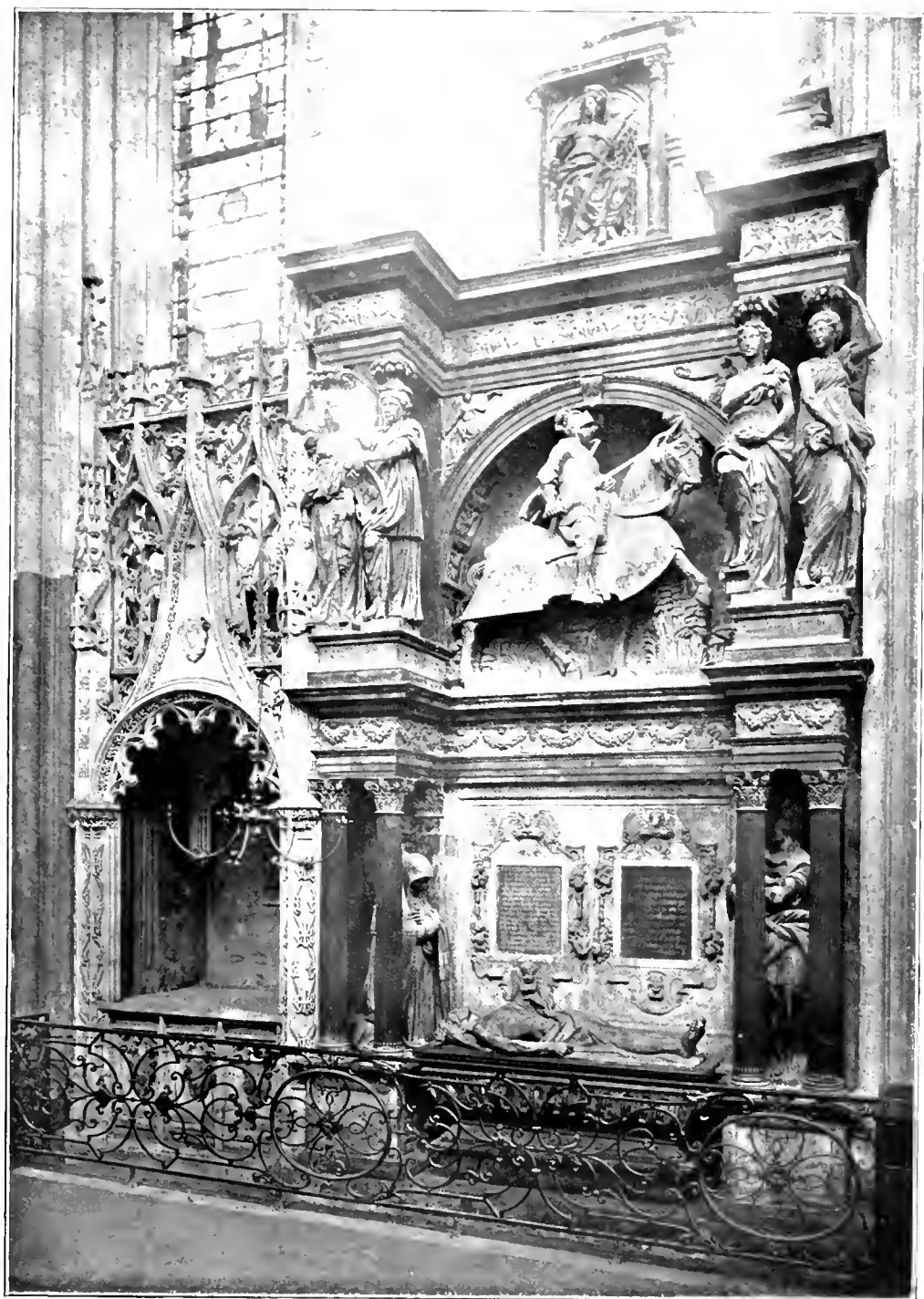
The curious thing is that while George of Amboise was building Gaillon, his elder brother Charles, Mareschal of France, and Grand Master of the Household was adding to Chaumont on the Loire absolutely in the old French manner, with cylinder towers, machicolations, and conical roofs; and except for details here and there the house is little removed from a mediaeval fortified castle. The explanation may be that Charles de Chaumont followed the design of the older building in his additions, which consisted of the entrance with the flanking towers to right and left, and the adjacent buildings.<sup>2</sup> Ussè, which is a little later, shows the same reluctance to abandon the familiar type, though in this case it is less in evidence, owing to later alterations.

The new manner, as yet, had by no means found its footing in France. It owed its introduction to individual initiative and exceptional circumstances. Apart from the King, the new men, treasurers and superintendents of finance, were mainly responsible. Bohier for example, at Chenonceaux, Berthelot, at Azay le Rideau, houses built not only within a few years of the date of Chaumont, but within the neighbourhood of the house itself, and of such an old-world Château as Langeais. The main block of Chenonceaux was built between 1513 and 1524 for Thomas Bohier, Chamberlain to Louis XI, Charles VIII, Louis XII, and François I, Intendant of Finances and Lieutenant-Governor for the King in Italy. Bohier was connected with the families of Duprat and Briçonnet,<sup>3</sup> and was a very rich man, or he would hardly have attempted the costly enterprise of building his house in the middle of the Cher. The entrance from the

<sup>1</sup> The sculpture of this monument was by Mansuy Gauvain, and was painted by Pierquin Fauterel. Mansuy Gauvain was also employed on the Ducal Palace at Nancy 1502-12.

<sup>2</sup> Félibien, "Memoires," 58, mentions the terrace and gallery supported on carved shells and consoles, and a fine staircase  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide which was left unfinished. The device of the flaming mountains which is carved on the walls was carried out for de Chaumont who died in Italy in 1511. About the year 1559 Chaumont was bought by Catherine de Medici who forced Diane de Poitiers to take it in exchange for her house at Chenonceaux.

<sup>3</sup> See "Le Château de Chenonceaux," by M. l'Abbé C. Chevalier, Tours, 1869. Chevalier admitted that the designer was unknown, but without any evidence suggested that Pierre Nepveu or Trinquereau (the drinker) was the architect.



TOMB OF THE DUC DE BRIZE: ROUEN CATHEDRAL (P. 43)

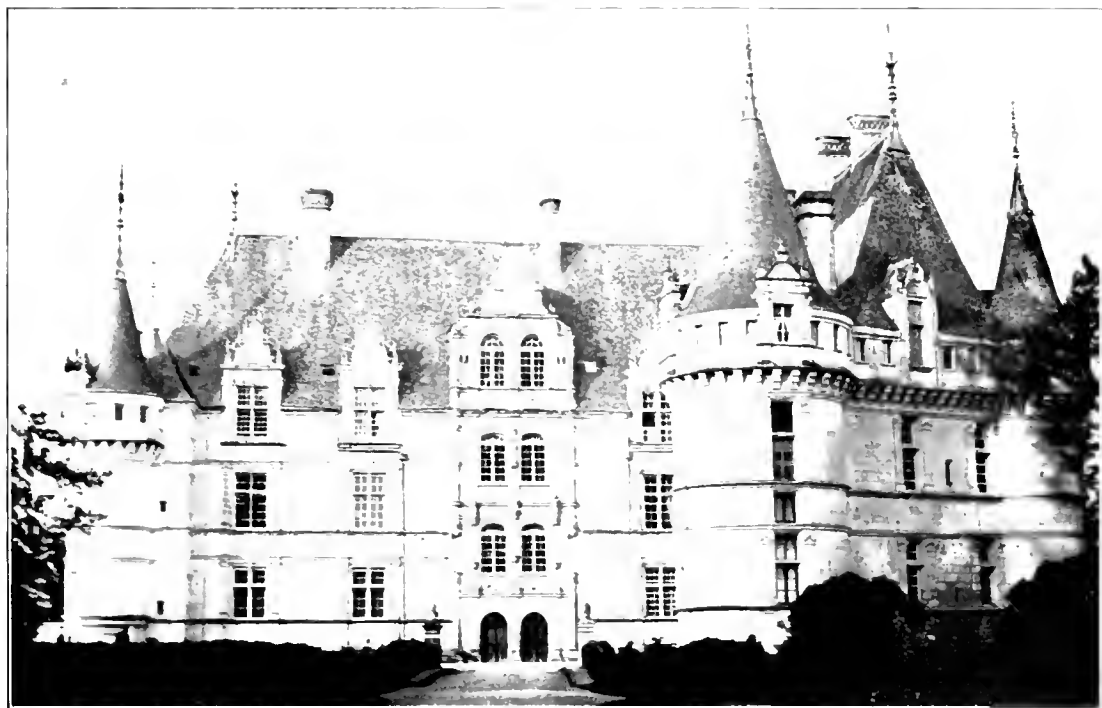






*U. L. photo.*

CHENONCEAU, FROM THE EAST (P. 44)



*Photo.*

*Mon. photo.*

VAY-LE-RIDEAU (P. 45)



forecourt is on the first floor, the lower storey above the river level being occupied by the kitchen and offices, "*très commodés et tout bien pratiqués*" (Félibien). The plan consists of a wide straight corridor with rooms on either side, but within the limits of this simple scheme, Bohier spared no effort and expense to make his house a masterpiece of the art of his time. The details of the chapel and the interior of the house are of exquisite delicacy, finer than anything that was done for the King, for these financiers knew their business and how to get the best of everything. Bohier who came from Issoire, as did Duprat, was first cousin of the latter, and married Catherine Briçonnet, through whom he became allied to the great financial families of Berthelot, Poncher, and Jacques de Beaune, more generally known as De Semblançay. Bohier, who was twice in Italy with Charles VIII and Louis XII, died in 1524, and his son Antoine was almost ruined by the onslaught on the financiers in 1527, when De Semblançay was hung at Montfaucon though he was eighty-two years old; Antoine Bohier was fined 190,000 livres tournois, but compounded by giving up Chenonceaux to the King in 1533. In 1547, the year of his accession, Henri II presented it to Diane de Poitiers, Duchesse de Valentinois. Azay le Rideau was built for Gilles Berthelot, Treasurer-General of François I, at about the same time as Chenonceaux, and is, with that house, one of the finest examples left of the buildings of the earlier part of François' reign. Its plan and general scheme is more advanced than that of Chenonceaux, which, in spite of its detail, was based on the late mediaeval house. In 1520-30 France was not torn in pieces by civil wars; Berthelot, a civilian, had no need for a fortress, and so he built this pleasant country house with its exquisite details by the tranquil waters of the Indre. Azay le Rideau is important in the history of the early French Renaissance in that it was the first deliberate break with mediaeval methods of planning. Its design is more mature than that of the house that Duprat, the notorious Chancellor of France, built for himself at Nantouillet. Duprat was a man of low extraction, from Issoire in the Auvergne, who, from being an avocat at Paris rose to be Chancellor of France and Cardinal Archbishop of Sens. Able, unscrupulous, indifferent to anything but success, he was the least likely of men to sympathize with art or to understand it. Sauvageot,<sup>1</sup> who gave carefully measured drawings of Nantouillet, had a high opinion of its merits, but it is difficult to agree with this view. The design is wanting in charm, and the mixture of

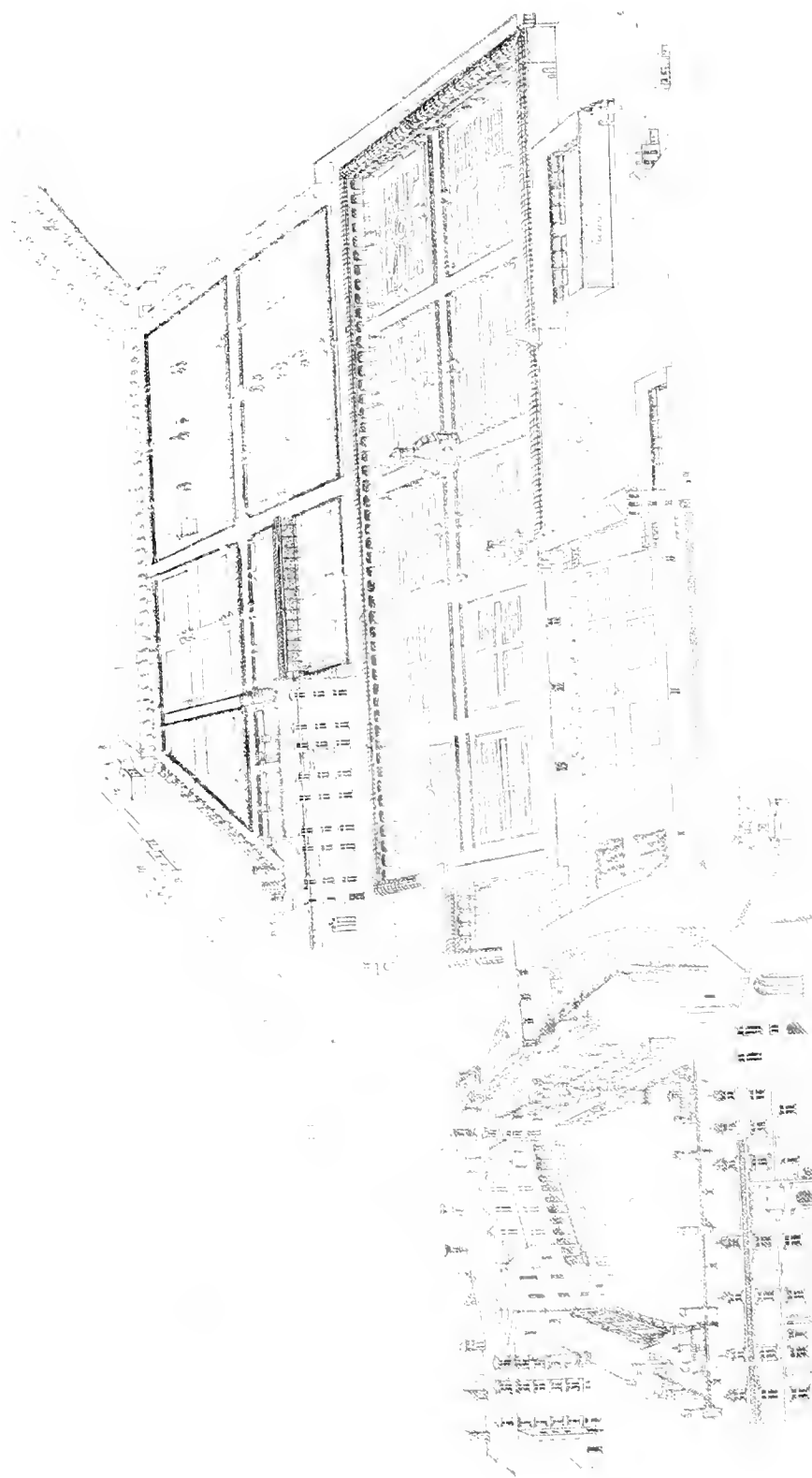
<sup>1</sup> "Palais, Châteaux, Hôtels, et Maisons de France," iv, 27.

late Gothic and early Renaissance detail is less attractive here than in many other instances, such, for example, as the little memorial chapel at Ancy-le-Franc, built in 1526 by Jean le Cosquin, Lord of Fulvey, or the lace-like tracery over the niches of the gallery of the staircase at Chateaudun. There is no escaping individuality, and Duprat seems to have expressed his own unpleasant personality in the design of his house.

The man, however, who most of all contributed to the establishment of the new manner in France was François I himself. Du Cerceau says the King "*estoit merueilleusement adonné après les bâtimens, de sorte que c'était le plus grand de ses plaisirs,*" but he adds that the worst of it was that he seldom stopped to finish his work, and when a building was once completed seemed indifferent whether it was kept in repair or not. In fact if anyone told the King that a building was in good order he replied at once that it could not be his. His interest in building seems to have been in giving instructions for the work and seeing it grow. The King "*qui aimait fort à bâtir*"<sup>1</sup> was practically his own architect. Du Cerceau says that it was impossible to say that anyone else was responsible for St. Germain-en-Laye, and the unusual plans of his hunting-boxes, such as La Muette and Chaluau, were probably due to the King himself. It is difficult to follow exact chronological order in dealing with the royal houses, because many of them were building at the same time, and none of them were completely finished. Fontainebleau, Villers Cotterets, Chambord, the Château de Madrid, St. Germain-en-Laye, and La Muette, were all in hand at once, and were still being altered and added to down to the end of the sixteenth century. Moreover, many of the King's houses were erected on the site of older buildings, and the old foundations were often used again, possibly to preserve the vaulted cellars. Blois, Fontainebleau, Villers Cotterets, and St. Germain were all built on the site of older buildings. This fact, and the King's personal direction of his buildings, account for their irregular and haphazard character. Though specifications ("*Devis*") were drawn up in order to arrive at a contract for the work, it seems doubtful whether there were any carefully measured plans of the old work, or working drawings to scale of the new. The building contractor was in fact free to carry out the work his own way within certain general lines. No architect was employed, and no comprehensive plan dealing with the building as a whole seems to have been thought of. The results were what usually happen, when the

<sup>1</sup> Du Cerceau.





*1796 Courville del.*

THE CHATEAU; BLOIS (P. 47)

amateur lets himself go on a building, omissions and want of foresight had to be repaired as the work went along and as best they could, and it was only the tradition of the building trades, handed down from father to son, that saved the royal amateur from a succession of disasters, a point on which Philibert de l'Orme declared himself with extreme bitterness after the King's death. These facts of the personal interference of the King in building, and the adherence to the ground-plan of much older buildings, have to be carefully watched in tracing the development of French domestic architecture.

The King's first enterprise in buildings seems to have been the additions at Blois, known as the wing of François I, on the north side of the Château, between the Salle des Etats and what are now the buildings of Gaston d'Orléans. The building was undertaken for the Queen, Claude, daughter of Louis XII and Anne de Bretagne, and in later years seems to have been regarded by the King with the same indifference as the Queen herself. Unfortunately all this part of the building has been thoroughly restored in the relentless manner of the French, and much of the detail so much admired by the tourist is modern work. There is hardly a part of the Château, with the exception of Gaston d'Orléans' wing, which is not open to suspicion, and I may mention that the side of the court next the stairs, as it is now, does not agree with Du Cerceau's view. Little is known of the history of this wing which was built between 1515 and 1520. On 5th July 1516 the sum of 3,000 livres tournois was paid to Raymon Phelippeaux, master-mason of Blois, for work at the Château, but this can only have represented a very small part of the cost of this sumptuous work. As already mentioned, Il Boccador was living at Blois during the building of this wing, and M. Bournon<sup>1</sup> suggests that he was the architect. That he was engaged in its superintendence and supplied models for the ornament is exceedingly probable. Chambord, for which he supplied the models, could hardly have taken up all his time.<sup>2</sup>

No further evidence, however, has been discovered in support of this suggestion. Moreover, the model maker was seldom if ever the same as the architect. In the building accounts of Louis XIV there are entries of payments for models of buildings, but the payments are made to "menuisiers," cabinet-makers, who took their instructions from the architects of the buildings.

<sup>1</sup> "Blois, Chambord, et les Châteaux du Blésois." Fernand Bournon, Paris, 1908.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 30 note.

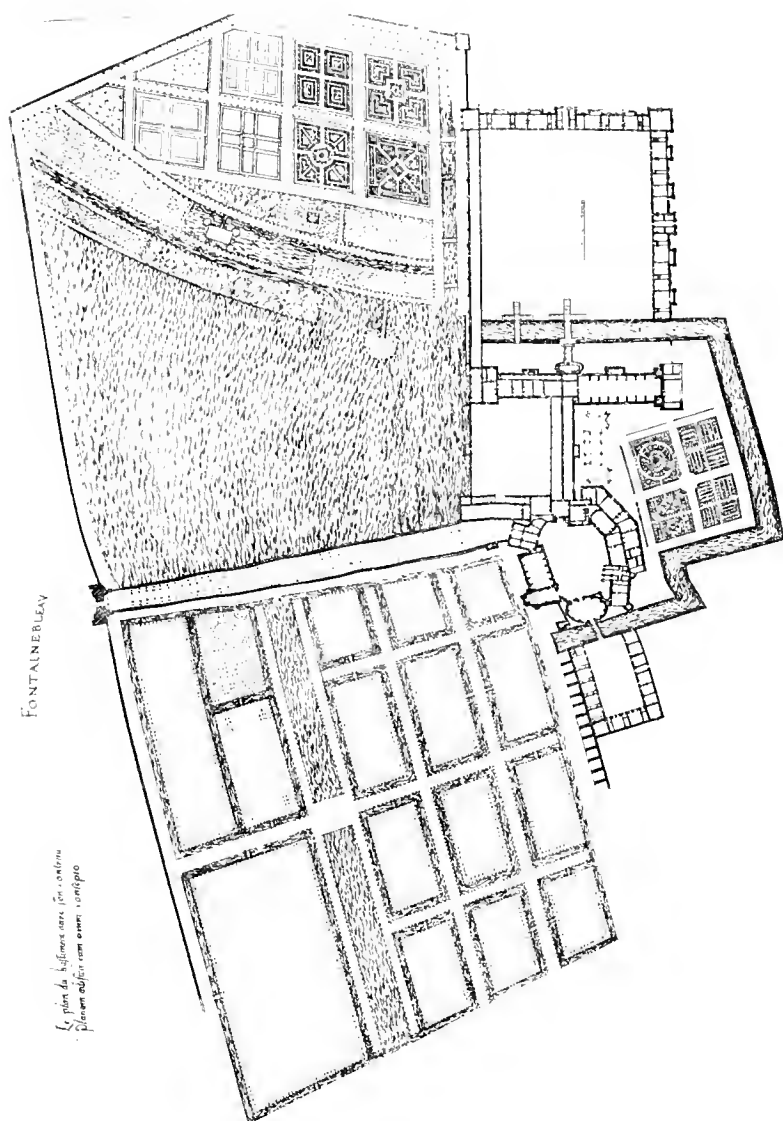
The general treatment of Blois is characteristic of the King's methods. He was fascinated by the delicate detail of the earlier Renaissance, and was determined to show at Blois that what Louis XII had attempted on the entrance wing in a tentative fashion, could be carried out in a great and dominant scheme of ornament. On the other hand, his imagination did not rise beyond ornament as the *raison d'être* of architecture. Blois was built by French masons, and their traditional methods are thinly concealed by this dressing of Italianate details. The great staircase, on which so much has been written, and which has been attributed on no evidence at all to Leonardo da Vinci,<sup>1</sup> is simply our old friend the "Vis St. Gilles," the mediaeval newel staircase of immemorial antiquity, set out in this case with a succession of openings between the angle piers, instead of in a solid outer wall. The whole principle of its construction, the central newel, the running vault, and the wreathed string, are to be found in the larger newel staircases of the mediaeval castle, indeed at Blois itself in the staircase of the building by Louis XII, and the substitution of Renaissance mouldings for the older sections, the open balustrades, the pilaster caps and niches do not alter this fact. The ingrained instincts of the master mason assert themselves triumphantly in the long line of gargoyles that gape and mouth from the cornice, high above the roofs and chimneys of Blois. One cannot but admire the beautiful detail of the staircase—as in other examples of the same date it is more delicate and fanciful than later work, when the Italian influence was losing its grip of France—but its architectural value is small. The cornice is overcrowded with ornament, and far too heavy for the treatment of the wall underneath it, and the staircase itself, though a marvellous *tour-de-force* as a piece of masonry, shows no consideration of its relation to the façade as a whole, its effect is restless and bizarre, a masterpiece of craftsmanship rather than of architecture. Immediately to the west of this wing is the block that François Mansart designed for Gaston d'Orléans: it would be impossible to find a better object-lesson of the difference that divides the work of the architect from that of the master-builder, the restraint and ordered dignity of the trained mind from the restless self-assertion of the ambitious tradesman. Félibien<sup>2</sup> remarks, "Bien que François I

<sup>1</sup> An admirable series of illustrations, and an attractive account of Blois, by Mr. Theodore Cook, appeared in "Country Life" for 25th February and 2nd March, 1907, but Mr. Cook's ingenious derivation of the design of this staircase from the shell "*Voluta Vespertilio*" will hardly convince the historical student.

<sup>2</sup> "Mémoires," p. 8.







Le plan de la ville de Fontainebleau, par lequel  
l'on voit l'étendue de son territoire  
et les divers édifices qui s'y trouvent.

[Du Coudray del.]

PLAN OF FONTAINEBLEAU (P. 49)

eut fait faire une infinité de grands et superbes bastimens, il y a néanmoins toujours un peu de la manière Gothique, et ce ne fut qu'à la fin de son règne qu'il fist travailler des ouvriers plus sçavants dans la bonne architecture. C'est ce qu'on peut assez remarquer dans le Chateau de Blois." Félibien's description of the Château de Blois is much the best in regard to its architecture. He gives an interesting account of an octagon apartment 40 ft. across with a dome 56 ft. high, all constructed in carpentry "d'un bois extraordinairement bien travaillé." This stood in the gardens and enclosed a beautiful marble basin and fountain. It was erected for Louis XII and Anne of Brittany, but when Félibien wrote the roof had fallen in and broken the fountain to pieces. Blois as usual was left unfinished, the guilloche ornament on the stairs is only started. It seems that the King became bored with the work before it was finished and directed his energies to Fontainebleau.

The history of Fontainebleau is very much better known. The Comptes contain the Devis of 1528 in full, and constant entries of payments to the tradesmen employed. It is possible to follow the progress of the works and decoration from the first contract with Gilles le Breton, through the régime of Il Rosso and his Italians, the brief control of Serlio, and the stormy times of Philibert de l'Orme, to the end of the long dominance of Primaticcio and his faithful Niccolo dell' Abbate.<sup>1</sup> De Cerceau says that Fontainebleau was a remote castle to which the kings of France used to retire for solitude. It appeared to François I to be just the place for one of his hunting palaces, set as it was in the midst of the vast forest of Fontainebleau, and it remained throughout his life his favourite residence. The Devis of 1528 gives full details as to the work of reconstruction. The old entrance was to be pulled down and a new square entrance-tower constructed, using the old walls as far as possible. On either side of the entrance-tower were to be two small square towers, about 13 ft. by 10 ft. 6 in., to contain seven storeys of cabinets. On the side to the court were to be formed open galleries or columns, and a "vis," or newel staircase, to communicate with the different storeys. This part of the work is the Tower of the Porte Dorée, opposite the causeway which divides the lake from the gardens of Le Nôtre. The next item in the Devis was the demolition of <sup>2</sup> "tout ce qui est mauvais et corrompu de gros mur

<sup>1</sup> For a full account of Fontainebleau see "Le Palais de Fontainebleau," by Rodolphe Pfnor; Palustre's "La Renaissance en France," 1879, Fontainebleau; and Dimier's "Le Primaticcio."

<sup>2</sup> Comptes, i, 29.

vieil" which separated the entrance-tower from the adjoining building and its re-building as a set of rooms with new chimney stacks as required. The same process was to be applied to the adjoining buildings, which were formed out of an old tower, described as the "Grosse vieille Tour," which occupied a more or less central position at one end of the "Cour Ovale." This set of rooms was assigned to the King's mother, Louise of Savoy. The next block of rooms was the King's, then came the grand staircase and the pavilion, containing a set of rooms for the royal children. It is impossible to say how much or how little of the older building was retained. Old walls were to be pulled down and rebuilt, or altered, heightened, and refaced as necessary to form the rooms of the palace, and the work so far consisted chiefly in remodelling the old castle, with the addition of the grand staircase and newel staircases,<sup>1</sup> "hors œuvres dedans la Cour," as necessary for access to the different floors. Certain of the old towers on the garden side were retained. An open triangular space, between the suite of rooms provided for the royal children and the great guard-room, was to be filled in with a "perron en forme d'une terrasse" or loggia with a vaulted roof and four stone columns on the side to the court, for the express purpose not only of giving shelter to the entrances, but of removing the unsightliness<sup>2</sup> of the angle. The great guard chamber<sup>3</sup> was to be rebuilt. It consisted of a hall or ground-floor 84 ft. long by 39 ft. 4 in. wide. On the upper floor were to be rooms and "garde-robes" with passages made in the thickness of the wall which was to be corbelled out both inside and out, "ainsi qu'elles le souilloient d'ancienneté," in order to give space for these passages, which were to be flagged and vaulted. A space was to be left at right angles to the guardroom for the chapel, the building of which was postponed, and beyond this, connecting with the entrance-tower, was to be erected a two-storey building, occupied on the ground-floor by officers, and on the upper floor by a gallery (now destroyed). Lastly Le Breton was to make a gallery about 192 ft. long by 18 ft. wide, to connect the château with the old Abbey buildings (of the Maturins). This gallery was to be in two storeys, ranging with the rooms of the château, with cabinets or small rooms out of it, and a newel staircase at the farther end communicating with the Abbey buildings. This is the gallery of François I, still standing, which was decorated with stucco and painting by Il

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 34.

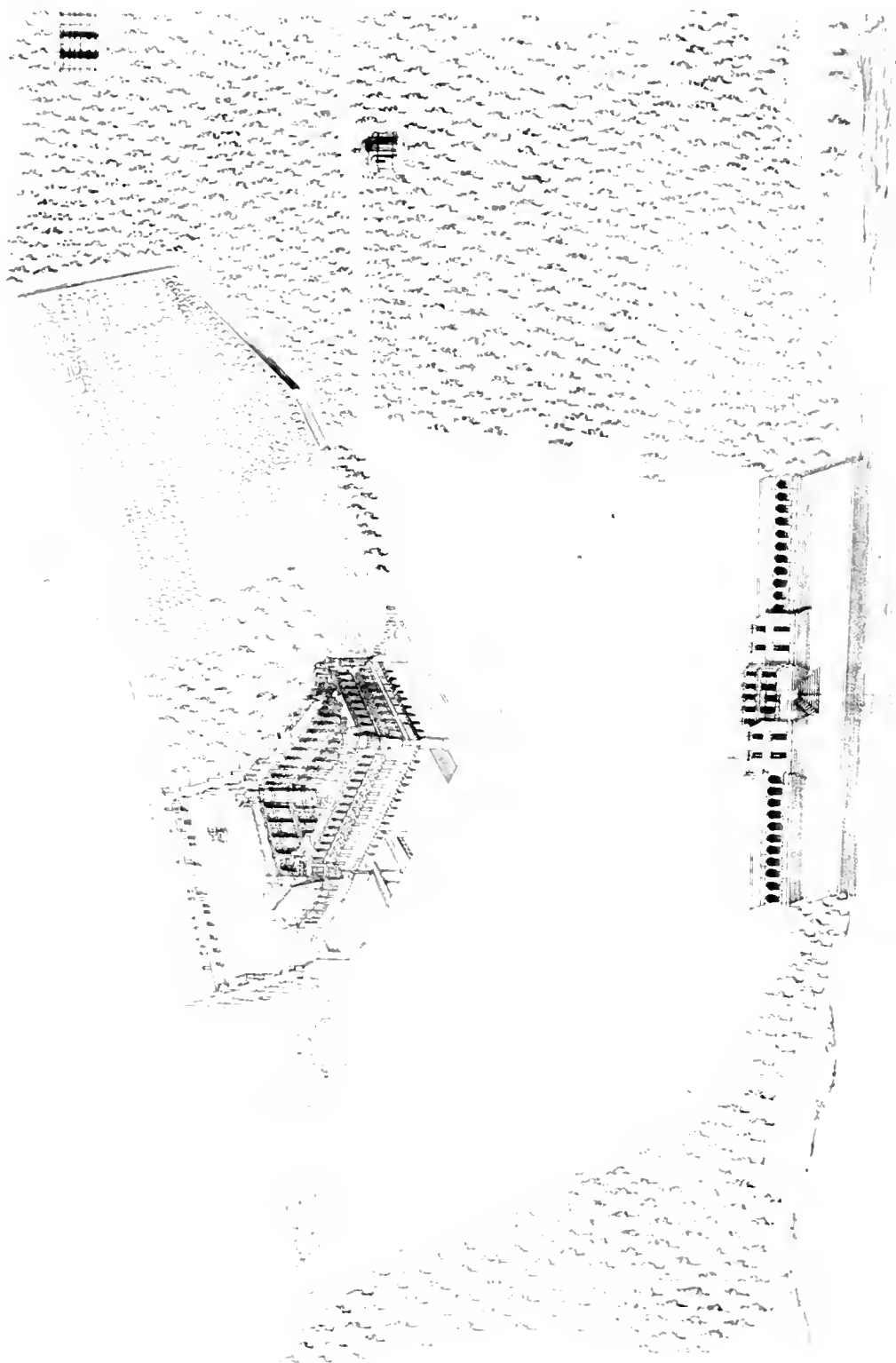
<sup>2</sup> "Pour ôter la difformité dudit triangle," *ibid.*, i, 39.

<sup>3</sup> Entirely destroyed under Henri IV.



CAPITAL. CHAPEL ST. SATURNIN, FONTAINEBLEAU (Pl. 52)





SEGMENT IN LINE OF 520  
TAMMING-AN-THU-CHU-THU-CHU-THU-CHU





Rosso and his men, and with joinery by Scibec of Carpi.<sup>1</sup> The contract for the chapels, that is the lower chapel of St. Saturnin with the "haute chapelle" above it and the grand staircase on the opposite side of the court, was not made with Gilles le Breton till 1531. The grand staircase was again remodelled by a contract made in 1540, and was finally passed by De l'Orme with the chapel in 1550.<sup>2</sup>

The work was constantly being extended and modified. The next work after the chapels appears to have been an isolated building known as the Pavillon des Poëles, overlooking the lake, and connected with the main block by a one-storey building with a terrace on the top, joining the gallery of François I at the end of the Chapelle de la Trinité. At right angles to this terrace ran the famous gallery of Ulysses, forming one side of what was afterwards known as the Cour de Cheval Blanc. The latest works undertaken by François I were the Salle de Bal and the Aile de la Belle Cheminée, the latter most probably having been designed by Serlio. As left by François, Fontainebleau consisted of an irregular court, roughly oval in shape, the plan of which was subordinated to that of the older building. To the south-west of this a three-sided court was begun, known as the Cour de la Fontaine, of which the east side (the Aile de la Belle Cheminée) was at any rate begun, the north side (the gallery of François I) was more or less finished, and the west side was only completed at the end next the lake by the Pavillon des Poëles with its adjoining one-storey building. The design, with the exception of the Aile de la Belle Cheminée, is in the regular manner of the master masons of the time, with little pretension to serious architecture. Serlio, who seems to have had little or no luck at Fontainebleau, said bitterly that the chimneys were only worthy of "un muratore, il quale non habbia i termini della buona architettura." The most interesting features of this work are the internal decorations of the gallery of François I

<sup>1</sup> The whole of the work in this gallery was "restored" with new paintings by M. Alaux for Louis Philippe, in a most disastrous manner.

<sup>2</sup> The exact history of these buildings has been the subject of a good deal of controversy. The account I have given is based on the Devis. An excellent detail analysis of the work contained in the Devis with explanatory plans is given in Dimier, "Le Primatice," 241-256. M. Dimier has made up his mind that the Aile de la Belle Cheminée was not built till 1570, and therefore omits it. He also omits the Salle de Bal. I have already given reasons for thinking that the first was designed by Serlio, as the King's architect at Fontainebleau, and Serlio himself tells the story of the Salle de Bal. Both of these should therefore have been given in M. Dimier's plan of the château under François I.

and the chamber of Madame d'Etampes,<sup>1</sup> and the very remarkable capitals on the outside of the chapel of St. Saturnin, with stags' heads for volutes, Salamanders and great F's trimmed with ribbands. The work done for François at Fontainebleau is of peculiar importance, because it was here that the Italian artists established themselves in sufficient force to make a real impression on the decorative arts of France.<sup>2</sup> They did, but in a much more effectual manner, what Henry VIII's imported artists did in England; but whereas in England, owing to the break with the Papacy, the Italian influence came to a premature end, and was superseded by the crude ingenuity of Flemings and Germans, in France it ran its course, unaffected in the main by these injurious currents.

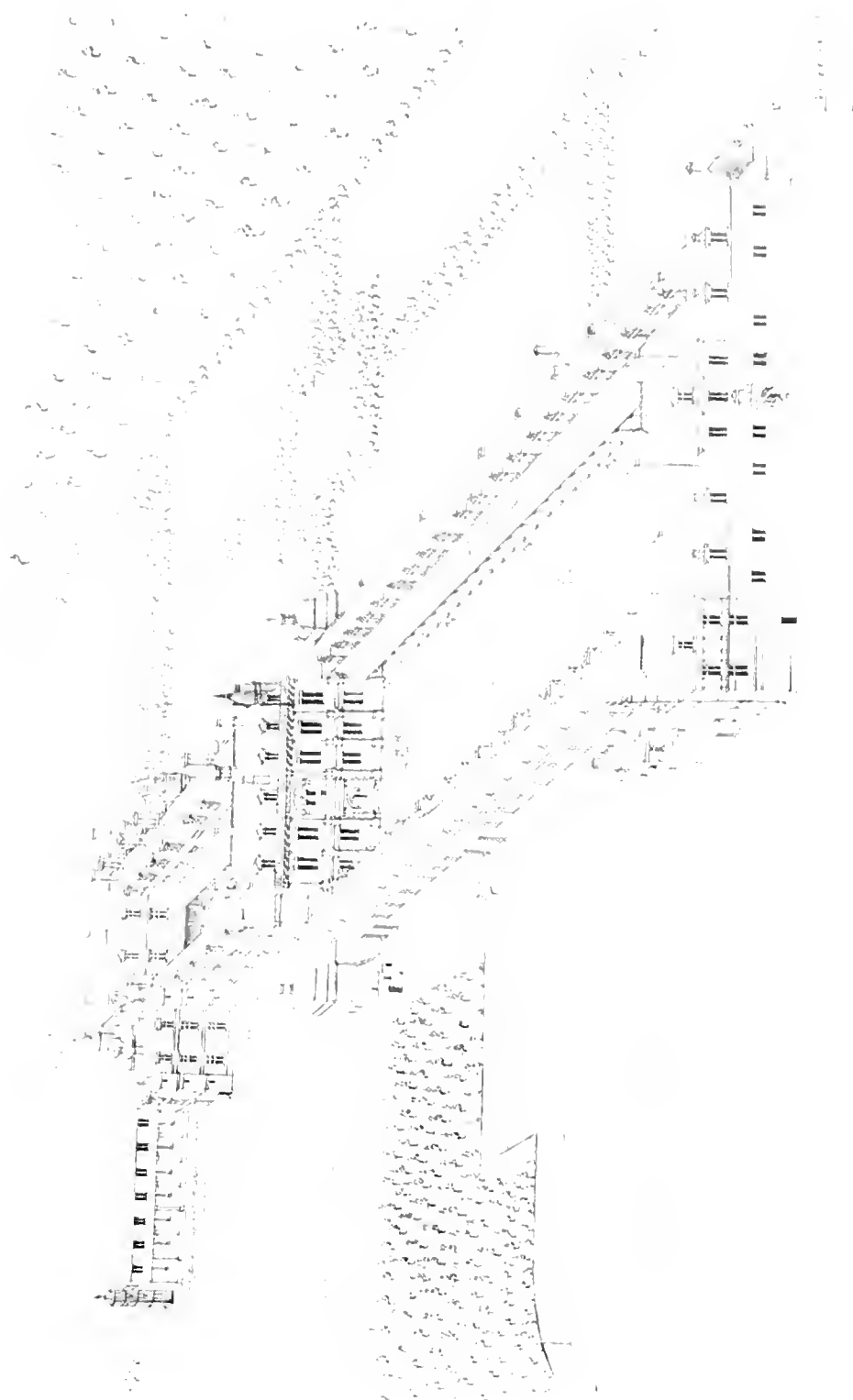
St. Germain-en-Laye is another example of a building in which the plan was dictated by the foundations of an earlier building, "*d'une assez sauvage quadrature.*"<sup>3</sup> St. Germain had been a royal residence for centuries; Louis IX built the famous chapel between 1230 and 1240; the Donjon Tower was built by Charles V in 1366, and when François I rebuilt the château he built on the old foundations, and embodied the chapel and Charles V's Tower in his new buildings. Unfortunately St. Germain has been so thoroughly "restored"<sup>4</sup> that its historical value has ceased to exist, but the peculiarity of its general design is very striking. The use of brickwork for its two upper storeys, the windows deeply recessed under arches between the buttresses, the balustrade, and the absence of the usual steep pitched roof, make St. Germain unique among the great French houses of the first half of the sixteenth century. The top storey was vaulted and covered in with stone flags in steps, with the object of forming a terrace walk along the top.

<sup>1</sup> Now the Escalier du Souverain. Palustre says that the figures here were executed by Laurent Regnauldin, otherwise Lorenzo Naldini.

<sup>2</sup> A list of the Italians employed at Fontainebleau in 1553-70 will be found in Appendix I to my "Studies in Architecture," to which I may refer the reader for a further account of the work of Il Rosso and Primaticcio.

<sup>3</sup> Du Cerceau.

<sup>4</sup> The rebuilding was begun by M. Millet, architect, in 1862, and was completed under M. Daumet. M. Millet's object, approved by the "Conseil supérieure des Bâtiments civils," was to remove all buildings subsequent to the time of François I. He accordingly swept away the five pavilions added by J. H. Mansart for Louis XIV, and found it necessary to rebuild a good deal of the fabric. By a decree of 1862 the building was to be used as a museum of Gallo-Roman antiquities, of which there is now a very complete collection, of much greater interest to the historical student than this most radical "restoration" of the building of François I. One is tempted to say that no greater misfortune can befall an old building in France than to be classified as an historical monument.



VILLES-BOULEVARD, N. 55



The vault was tied in with iron bars, a procedure so unusual and indeed so unnecessary to men who understood vaulting as the Frenchmen did, that some colour is lent to Félibien's statement that Serlio was the architect. It is probable that he suggested the terrace top; but du Cerceau, though he says it was the first of its kind in Europe, does not mention Serlio, and states that the King himself was to all intents the architect. His motive seems to have been to get his building as high as he could for the sake of the view. This was certainly the case at La Muette near St. Germain and also at Chaluau, a hunting lodge in the neighbourhood of Fontainebleau. St. Germain-en-Laye is not mentioned in the letters patent of 1528, but first occurs in a patent of June 1532,<sup>1</sup> after which year work was constantly being done on the building. It appears that in 1540 François became impatient, for in that year Maitre Pierre Petit was appointed to keep his eye on the masons and other persons at work at St. Germain, to see that they did their work diligently, and was to "pursue, worry, and hustle them"<sup>2</sup> so that they completed their work with as little delay as possible. Pierre Chambiges was at this time the master mason, and the "hustling" may have shortened his days, for he died in 1544, and was succeeded by Guillaume Guillain and Jean Langeries, who in 1547 came under the masterful hand of De l'Orme, and were compelled to disgorge their ill-gotten gains.<sup>3</sup>

Villers Cotterets, which is usually mentioned in the Comptes with Fontainebleau, Boulogne or the Château de Madrid, and St. Germain, was another of the hunting lodges begun by François I on a prodigal scale, and never finished. Wherever there was a fine forest within easy reach of Paris, the temptation to the King to build a hunting-box seems to have been irresistible. Fontainebleau, St. Germain, and Villers Cotterets stood in the midst of enormous tracts of wooded country, and the forest of Villers Cotterets was one of the largest and richest in game of any in France. A castle, ruined in the 100 years' war, stood on the site and possibly the first idea was to adapt the earlier buildings; as usual, however, this ended in rebuilding on a lordly scale, but with such haste and negligence that when du Cerceau wrote thirty years later, Villers Cotterets was already becoming ruinous. The older building was worked into the block which afterwards divided the inner and outer court. The offices were built round the outer court, the inner

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 22. It appears that in 1528 a water supply was brought to St. Germain.

<sup>2</sup> "Poursuivre, solliciter et haster," Comptes, i, 148.

<sup>3</sup> "Instructions de Monsieur d'Yvry," Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," 51.

being reserved for the King and his attendants, the King's rooms occupying a projecting block at the north side. The exact dates are not known: work was in progress here between 1532 and 1537,<sup>1</sup> and the large room,<sup>2</sup> now called the Chapel, which was originally the Salle des Etats, was completed before 1539. In that year the famous ordinance of Villers Cotterets was signed here, enacting that public acts and judgments should be published in French. The echo of the nationalism which inspired this ordinance seems to linger about the details of this hall. As compared with the gallery of François I at Fontainebleau, the ornament at Villers Cotterets is clearly the work of Frenchmen, giving their own version of Italian motives. It is not known who these men were. Rather later it appears from the accounts that Jacques and Guillaume le Breton were employed here as masons from 1540 to 1550, when they received £50,955 17s. 6d. for masonry, the total amount spent on all trades, including the wages of Blaise de Cormier "pour avoir l'œil et regard à faire bien travailler tous les ouvriers," being £102,075 10s. 6d. The remains of this work are now to be seen at the further end of the first court. On the outside there is little left except one or two windows with shells in the tympana, supported by small cupids. The entrance is under an elliptical arch, panelled, coffered, and richly carved, and this treatment is carried up the main stairs. It is also found in a passage to a small staircase with a most elaborate ceiling, divided into three panels by elliptical arches. In the top panel is Hercules and the Nemean lion, in the second Venus and Cupid, in the third a satyr and a woman, subjects which the guide-books describe as "scènes légères" and which are characteristic of the amazing atmosphere of the court of François I.

Villers Cotterets has shared the fate of most of François' buildings. St. Germain has been turned into a museum, Villers Cotterets into a workhouse, Chaluau, La Muette, and the Château de Madrid have long disappeared, Folembray is in ruins and never seems to have recovered from its burning by the "Hannuyers" when Charles V of Spain invaded France. It is shown in a ruinous condition by du Cerceau, and no repairs seem to have been undertaken till 1596.<sup>3</sup>

At the Château de Madrid in the Bois de Boulogne, and at Chambord, there was no question of older buildings. These houses were new from top to bottom, and the marked differences in their design show the chaotic state of the arts in the reign of François I.

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 140.

<sup>2</sup> It measures about 60 ft. long by 22 ft. wide.

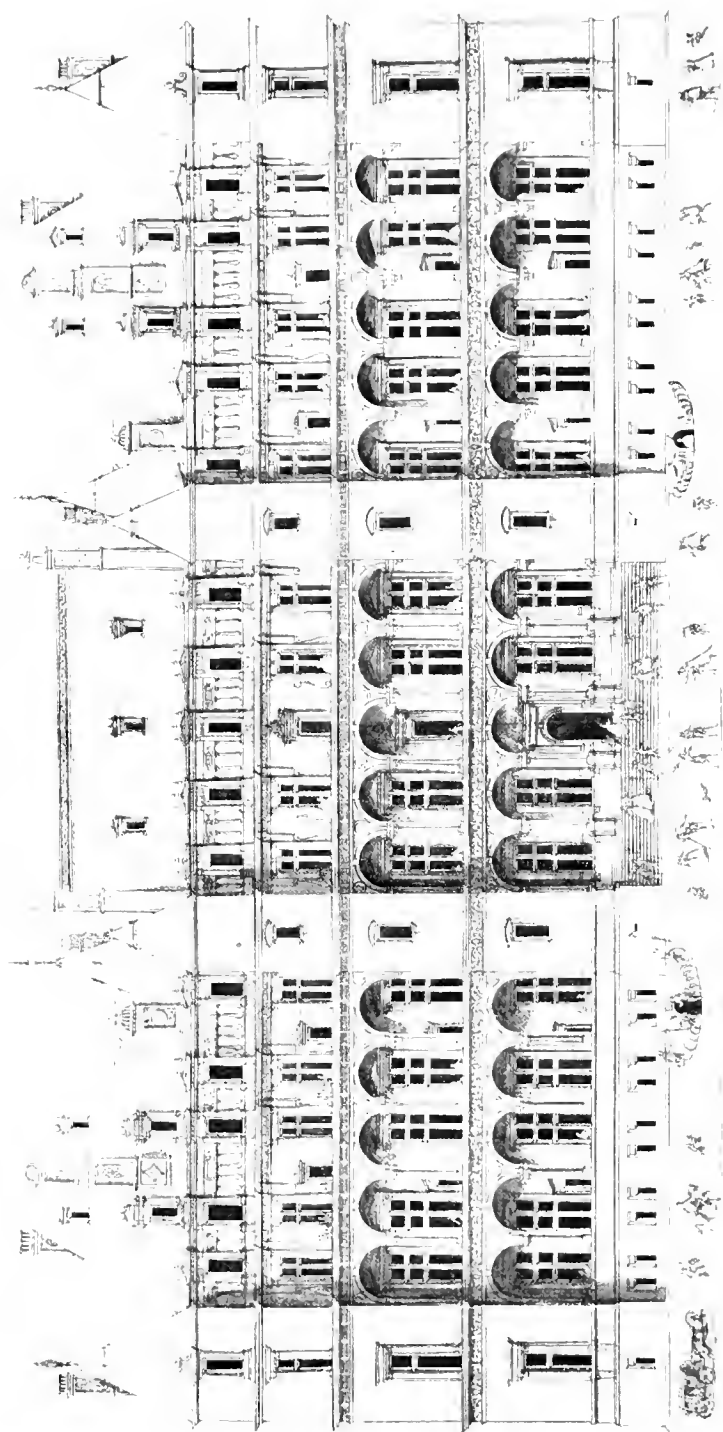
<sup>3</sup> See Laborde, Comptes, i, xlv.



CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES (P. 55)







CHÂTEAU DE MADRID. VOIS DE BOULEVARD (P. 50)



Chambord, which still remains the most complete, and on the whole the greatest,<sup>1</sup> of his enterprises, was also one of the earliest. It was begun in 1519, and this partly accounts for its peculiarities, for although it was probably intended by the King to exhibit in all its perfection the new manner, in point of fact it adhered to the old French tradition. The design, it is true, is regular and symmetrical, and the centre block, has the four-way corridor plan, but this itself was a development from the late mediaeval house and the cylindrical towers with their conical roofs, the great height of parts of the building, the elliptical arches of the corridors, and the search for effect by sky-line rather than by mass, all show the mediaeval tradition, and no one but a French mason steeped in that tradition could have carried out the marvellous double staircase which was still the wonder of architects when Inigo Jones visited Chambord a hundred years later. Du Cerceau considered "tout l'édifice admirable, à cause de cette grosse masse" (the central block), "et rend un regard merveilleusement superbe à l'occasion de la besogne qu'y est."<sup>2</sup> The remark is characteristic of du Cerceau, who appraised buildings chiefly by the intricacy of their details, but there is no escaping the attraction of Chambord: it may not be great architecture, but it has the sort of charm one would expect from the palace of the Marquis of Carabas. I have already dealt with the question of the designer of Chambord.<sup>3</sup> The names appear as usual, Denis Sourdeau, Pierre Nepveu, and Jacques Coqueau, all in turn described as "the architects" by French writers. It is impossible to accept this attribution in view of the payment to Il Boccador for his model of Chambord made years before. The probable solution is that Dominique prepared his model soon after the accession of François I, and that this model was followed by the successive master masons who contracted for the work. It is probable also that Dominique supplied the models for all the details of pilasters, capitals, and moldings. The pilaster treatment on the exterior resembles that at Fontainebleau, and presented no particular difficulties, but the mason got into serious trouble when it came to giving the columns their proper entasis. The

<sup>1</sup> The main façade measures 180 paces.

<sup>2</sup> Chambord is still in the hands of the restorer. It appears that when Palustre wrote, in 1892, the four-way corridors had floors between the first and second storeys, which were afterwards removed, and the staircase thrown open, giving a very bizarre effect to the staircase. Since that date the floors have been replaced in three of the arms, the fourth still has the two storeys thrown into one. Theories of French architecture which depend on buildings that have passed through the hands of the restorer rest on very unstable foundations.

<sup>3</sup> See page 30.

columns round the lantern resemble an ill-shaped cigar and were probably set out by eye, and a very imperfectly trained eye.

The Château de Madrid, which once stood in the Bois de Boulogne, was begun in 1528. Du Cerceau considered it of such importance that he devoted eight plates in his first volume to its illustration. Its peculiarity, in his mind, consisted in its plan, "tout une masse," that is, a solid block instead of the courtyard plan, and in the terra-cotta details with which it was ornamented in every part of the building. The château was of great height, five storeys and an attic. The principal floor was reached by a broad flight of steps leading up from the ground level and opening on to a Loggia in five bays, with semi-circular arches on piers. These arches were repeated on either side as a wall arcade. The design was repeated on the first floor, and above the first floor gallery was a Doric entablature with a balustrade, and an open terrace, at the back of which the building rose two more storeys, covered in by a steep pitched roof with elaborate lucarnes. The centre bay was separated by square towers from the two side bays, which had pavilion roofs carried up high above the centre block; otherwise the design, as shown by du Cerceau, was monotonous. It may have been imposing from its great size and brilliant ornament, but as a treatment of mass and plane it seems to have been rudimentary, and the details of the interior, as shown in du Cerceau, appear to have been florid and exuberant. The control of the architect is conspicuously absent, and the result is what one would expect from a princely amateur with considerable knowledge of details, and nothing to keep him straight but the actual workmen who were to supply those details. The Château de Madrid was begun in 1528, the same year as Fontainebleau, and under the same patents. De Champeverne was appointed to deal with the building "ainsi qu'il [François I] a devisé et donné à entendre à son cher et bien aimé varlet de chambre." Jerome Della Robbia and Pierre Gadier were the contractors. Gadier and de Champeverne died in 1531, the latter being succeeded by Pierre Paul and Pierre des Hôtels, and Gadier by Gratian François, who received with Della Robbia 54, 288, 17, 7, in 1537,<sup>1</sup> Della Robbia receiving a separate payment for his enamels.<sup>2</sup> Further payments were made to Della Robbia and Gratian François in 1541 and 1550.<sup>3</sup> In the latter year De l'Orme succeeded to the charge of the royal

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 117, 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 110, "à Hierome de la Robie, sculpteur et emailleur de terre cotte."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 138, 217.

palaces, and added an upper storey to the Château de Madrid in which he suppressed the enamelled terra-cotta, "de laquelle je ne voulais faire user, comme l'on avait fait auparavant, pour autant qu'il me semble qu'elle n'est convenable avec les maçonneries," though he considered it might possibly be suitable for the ornament of chimney pieces.<sup>1</sup> Della Robbia appears to have been so much disgusted that he left Paris in 1553, and did not return from Florence till 1560, when De l'Orme was superseded by Primaticcio, and the Italians were again in the ascendant in the struggle for supremacy in the arts. Della Robbia and Gratian François appear again in the Comptes in 1561 and 1563 (ii, 55-99). The last mention of Hierome Della Robbia, "sculpteur," is in the year 1565,<sup>2</sup> and according to Laborde he died in 1567.<sup>3</sup> The whole conception of the Château de Madrid seems to have been more than usually fantastic. Whether François was enamoured of the Moorish pottery of Spain, as Laborde suggests,<sup>4</sup> or of the polychromatic architecture he had seen in Italy, no record is left of the origin of this caprice. As usual with him the idea was just a fancy, applied in this case with peculiar inappropriateness to a hunting lodge, the last building in the world that required these garish and unstructural decorations. Laborde describes the Château de Madrid as "une féerie," something so daring and venturesome that no one but Della Robbia could have conceived it, or François I carried it out. Assuredly no architect who knew his business would have had anything to do with such a design in such a place. It was essentially the effort of amateurs in architecture.

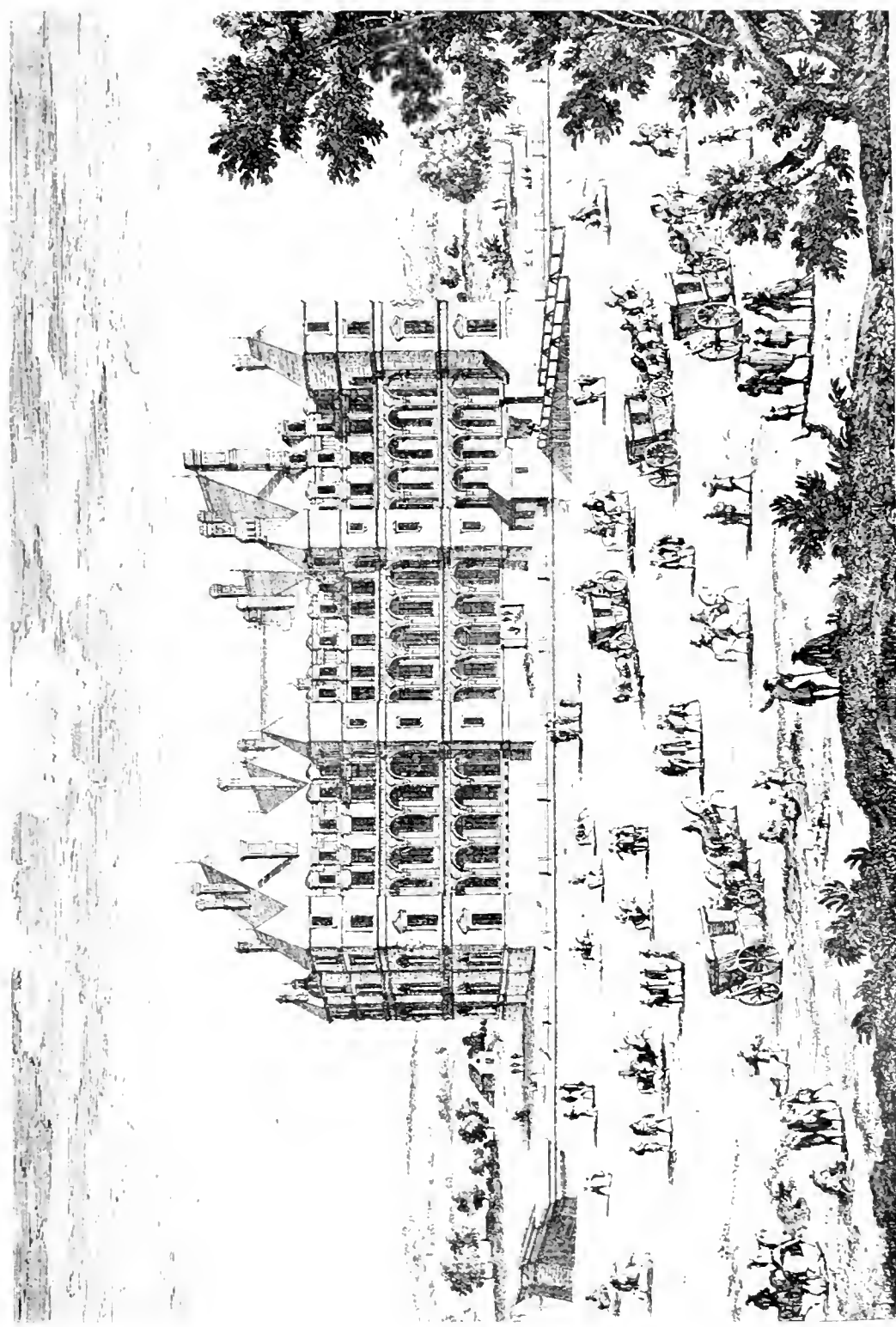
<sup>1</sup> "Architecture," ix, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Comptes (ii, 120), in the year 1565 he received 225 livres for two children in marble, for the tomb of François I, and for two small children about two feet high, seated on a skull, and holding a trumpet of Fame with flames reversed.

<sup>3</sup> Jerome della Robbia was the great-nephew of Luca. Vasari says that Jerome, who was the youngest of three brothers, worked in marble, clay, and bronze with Sansovino, Baccio Bandinelli, and others, and that he was brought over to France by certain Florentine merchants—Laborde thinks about the year 1527. Vasari says that he did many works for François I at "Madrid" not far from Paris, and also at Orleans, "e per tutto quel regno fece opera acquistandosi fama e bonissime faculta." In the Comptes he is called "Maistre maçon" (i, 138), "emailleur de terre cotte et sculpteur" (i, 217), "entre preneur du bastiment de Boulougne" (ii, 55, 99), and in 1563 "Maistre maçon et ingénieur" working under the direction of the Abbé of St. Martin (Primaticcio). It appears from the Comptes (ii, 369) that from the year 1534 onwards he was in receipt of a salary from the King of 240 livres, but the officials seem to have been quite uncertain as to his actual position and calling, and described him more or less at random.

<sup>4</sup> Laborde, "Le Château de Bois de Boulougne," Paris, 1855. Laborde wrote this almost entirely on the materials he found in the then unpublished Comptes.

The Château de Madrid was not completed till 1570, and at the end of the sixteenth century it was occupied by Margaret of Navarre in the latter days of her crazy life. In 1778 Louis XVI signed an order for its demolition together with Blois, Vincennes, and La Muette; but it was not finally destroyed till 1795, when it was sold to a certain Leroy, who pulled down as much of it as he could, and sold the enamels separately to a pavior who is said to have taken them away in carts and ground them up for cement. So ended this costly caprice of François I, uncared for even by its lawful owners. Indeed in the eighteenth century there was little to choose between the barbarisms of the Revolutionaries and the callous indifference of noble owners themselves. Since those days a new peril has arisen in the "restorer," whose function in France has been to wipe out the last touch of genuine history, and produce a spirited version of his own for an unsuspecting public. On the whole one would have preferred the mutilated fragments left by the Revolutionaries.



CHATEAU DE MADRID. — Vue prise du jardin, par le P. de la Harpe, en 1789. — Gravé par J. B. de la Harpe, en 1790. — Paris, chez la Citoyenne, Palais National, ci-devant, sous le Vestibule, par le P. de la Harpe, en 1790. — Paris, chez la Citoyenne, Palais National, ci-devant, sous le Vestibule, par le P. de la Harpe, en 1790. — Paris, chez la Citoyenne, Palais National, ci-devant, sous le Vestibule, par le P. de la Harpe, en 1790.

CHATEAU DE MADRID (Pl. 50-58)





## CHAPTER IV

### THE NEW MANNER TILL THE DEATH OF FRANÇOIS I

THE Court of François I was, in the literal sense of the word, a flying court. It was never in the same place six months together. The Venetian Ambassador complained that his whole life was spent in "peregrinations," and it appears from the Catalogue des Actes that between January 1530 and October 1531 the Court was at Compiègne, Amiens, Dieppe, Rouen, Argentan, Caen, Cherbourg, Rennes, Nantes, Angers, Tours, Chambord, and Fontainebleau.<sup>1</sup> In each of these places lodgement had to be found for the King and his Court, and there was thus some colourable pretext for the King's mania for building, but the real reason seems to have been his own restless excitability. At any moment he would break off one of his political tours for a hunting expedition, and wherever there was a great tract of forest within possible reach of political headquarters, the King built himself a hunting-box. The royal forests were of vast extent. Blondel says that the forest of Fontainebleau contained 30,285 acres, that of Compiègne 28,000, and that of Villers Cotterets 24,556.<sup>2</sup> It is characteristic of the King's extravagance that these hunting-boxes were often within an easy ride of his palaces. La Muette was only about six miles from St. Germain-en-Laye; there was another La Muette in the Bois de Boulogne, near the Château de Madrid, and Chaluau was within a few miles of Fontainebleau. La Muette was begun in 1541. It was of brick and stone, six storeys high, with a terraced roof as at St. Germain, in order that the King might watch his hounds at work in the forest. Chaluau, also of brick and stone, was in three storeys, arranged on much the same plan as La Muette and had a terraced roof for the same purpose. The specification for La Muette is given in the Comptes<sup>3</sup> together with the contract entered into by Pierre Chambiges on 22nd March 1541, Chambiges undertaking

<sup>1</sup> Lemonnier, "Histoire de France," vi, 1, 192. I may refer the reader to M. Lemonnier's volume for an admirably clear account of the Court of François I.

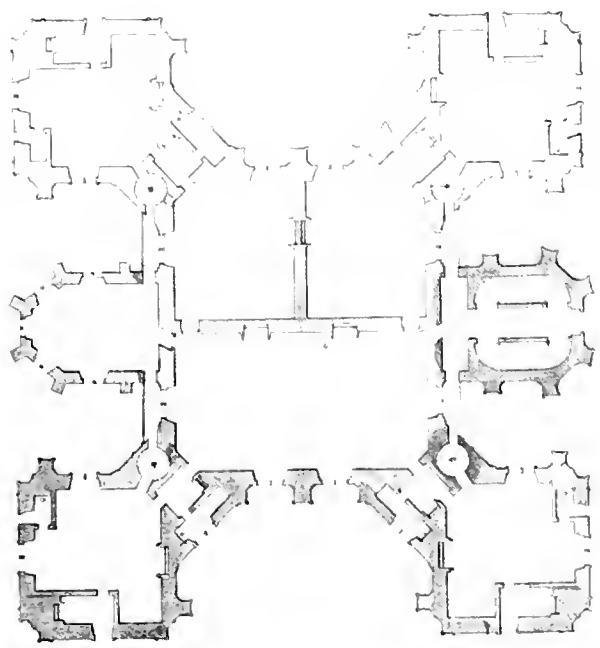
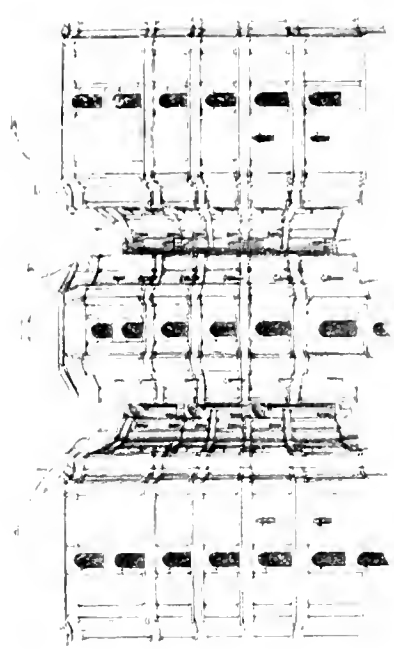
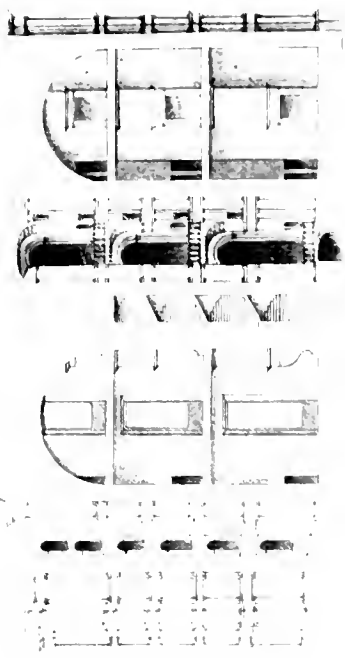
<sup>2</sup> "Arch. Française," i, 155.

<sup>3</sup> Comptes, i, 217, 222, 224.

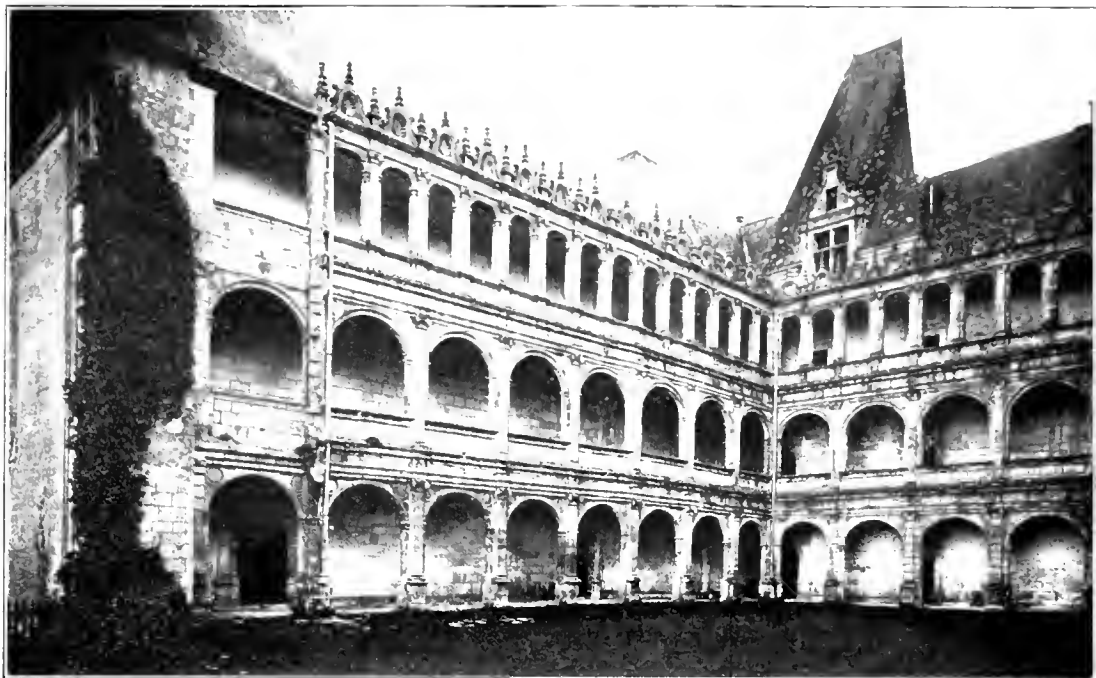
to carry out the work as specified and as shown in the "portrait." The work was completed by Guillaume Guillaing and Jean Langeries, and passed in 1548. The buildings were badly built and ill maintained. Repairs were carried out from time to time, and De l'Orme added one of his ingenious constructions to the terraces of La Muette, forming a covered-in gallery above it. But when Du Cerceau wrote, a few years later, both this building and Chaluau, which then belonged to the Duchesse d'Etampes, were falling into ruin.<sup>1</sup>

These buildings complete the long list of the King's houses. His example was followed throughout the country, and in every part of France are to be found buildings which more or less faithfully presented the new manner. There is little individuality about this work, nothing to arrest the attention by its originality, or its expression of any strong impulse in architecture. It is, in the main, trade work, the work, that is, of men who did what was expected of them, often with excellent skill but without ambition and without inspiration, for the workmen were not at home in the new manner. They followed it to the order of amateurs, who knew little more about it than the workmen themselves, and the attempt, more often than not, ended in failure. Moreover, enthusiasm for the new manner was by no means universal. The master-masons and tradesmen resisted it as far as they dared, and among the upper classes a strong under-current of conservatism was persistently at work, to some extent counteracting the development of the Renaissance. The owners of great houses were ready to go considerable lengths in rebuilding, but they were not prepared to sacrifice entirely buildings with which their family history was nearly associated. Hence the constant re-modelling of old buildings often on the old foundations, and in a totally incongruous manner, so far as archaeological correctness was concerned. At La Rochefoucauld, for example, when the greater part of the Château was rebuilt in 1522-35, the thirteenth-century keep was left, towering high above the roofs and chimneys of the later buildings, and the cylindrical towers with machicolations and conical roofs were allowed to remain at the angles of the court. At Chateaubriant, Jean de Laval left the old donjon to itself when he built his new house early in the sixteenth century, but he embodied in his building four smaller towers which stood on the original outer wall of the enclosure. Chateaubriant has the familiar flat pilaster in the interior of the court, similar to those on the river side of La Rochefoucauld and elsewhere, but it has definitely abandoned the machicolated cornices of

<sup>1</sup> La Muette was destroyed in accordance with an edict of Louis XVI in 1778.

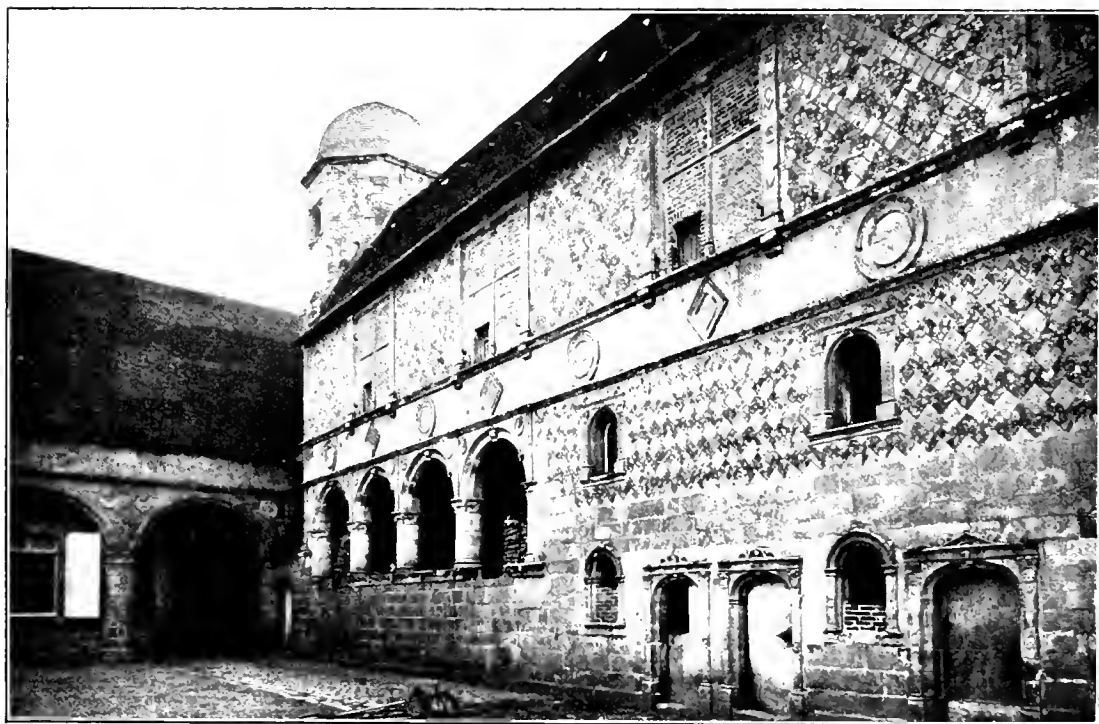






LA ROCHEFOUCAULD, CHARENTE (P. 65)

M. H.



MANOIR D'ANGO, VARANGEVILLE, SEINE INF. (P. 68)

M. H.



the earlier buildings of François I. The detail is plainer and more mature than that of La Rochefoucauld, though it is only fifteen years later.<sup>1</sup> The colonnade, which forms the south side of the court of honour, has plain semicircular arches brought down direct on to the capitals of the stone columns, and above is a gallery in brick and stone. It is difficult to realize that this simple treatment is of the same date as the elaborate arcades of the court of La Rochefoucauld. The work at La Rochefoucauld is of several dates. The keep is early thirteenth century, the angle towers apparently fourteenth century, the buildings between the towers on south and east sides, including the arcades and the great staircase, were completed in 1523, and the building between the keep and the north-west tower is late seventeenth century. The fourth side is open and has a modern balustrade, below which the ground drops abruptly. The arcades appear never to have been finished in detail, and the ribs of the vaulting on the ground floor bear no relation to the key stones over the doors into the west wing. The details throughout are coarse, but the staircase, a newel in a square of 22 ft. with steps 9 ft. 6 in. wide and a newel 3 ft. 6 in. in diameter, is one of the finest of its date in France. The date, 1523, with initials F. A., is on a small cartouche over the entrance to the main stairs.<sup>2</sup>

Progress in the art was still slow and uncertain, and the main determining factor for many years seems to have been whether or not the noble lord had been in Italy, and whether his builder had or had not come in contact with any wandering Italian artist in France. Two great houses, Ecouen, and Ancy-le-Franc, stand out conspicuously among the buildings of the latter part of the reign of François I. Both houses were entirely new and both were on a great scale. Ecouen is a house of two dates, an earlier house with certain remarkable frontispieces added some years later by Jean Bullant. The original house was built 1532-42 for the Constable of France, Anne de Montmorency, by Charles Billard, master-mason of Paris. The plan is a large quadrangle, measuring internally about 160 by 140 feet.<sup>3</sup> On three sides is a dry moat, on the fourth, where the ground falls sharply, there is a terrace and retaining wall. The chapel is at the south-east corner, and is part of the original design. Here, as usual, the Gothic tradition is followed with rather curious variations in the groining, but Renaissance details are found in

<sup>1</sup> It was finished in 1538.

<sup>2</sup> In 1908 the house was unoccupied and becoming ruinous.

<sup>3</sup> Du Cerceau gives the measurements 132 by 120 ft. Those given in the text are from my own rough notes made on the spot.

the gallery at the west end which was probably added by Bullant. The entrance to the Château, on the east side, was in three storeys. In the top storey was an open archway with a figure of a Roman soldier on horseback brandishing a sword, and on the top of the piers at either side were sphinxes. This gateway, which was designed by Bullant, is now destroyed.

Billard's work is not remarkable,<sup>1</sup> except for the extreme simplicity of the plan, its size, and, as at La Rochefoucauld, the admirable placing of the building on its rock above the town. All these matters were probably settled by the Constable himself, a man of violent and arbitrary temper, but a lordly patron of artists. It appears, however, either that Billard proved inadequate, or that the Constable's disgrace in the latter years of François I rendered it necessary to suspend the work; and the building operations were not resumed till ten years later,<sup>2</sup> when Jean Bullant became the Constable's architect and worked for him till Montmorenci's death at the battle of St. Denis in 1567. I shall return to Ecouen when dealing with Bullant.<sup>3</sup>

Ancy-le-Franc was considered by Sauvageot to be unique in the history of the French Renaissance, on account both of its completeness and of its association with Serlio and Primaticcio. Du Cerceau says it so contents the eye that it might have been made in one day. He found it, he says "*bien mignard et à mon gré*," more particularly on account of the terrace on the further side of the moat, and raised some 6 ft. 8 in. above it. The moat, which Sauvageot describes as twenty-three mètres wide, was crossed by bridges in the front and at the back of the building. Most unfortunately it was filled up in 1836. The terraces had long been destroyed, and the building has been restored and altered to such an extent that it is now difficult to do justice to its original design. The terraces and moat would certainly have diminished the harsh and abrupt manner in which the building rises straight out of the ground. The loss of these and the increase in the number of window

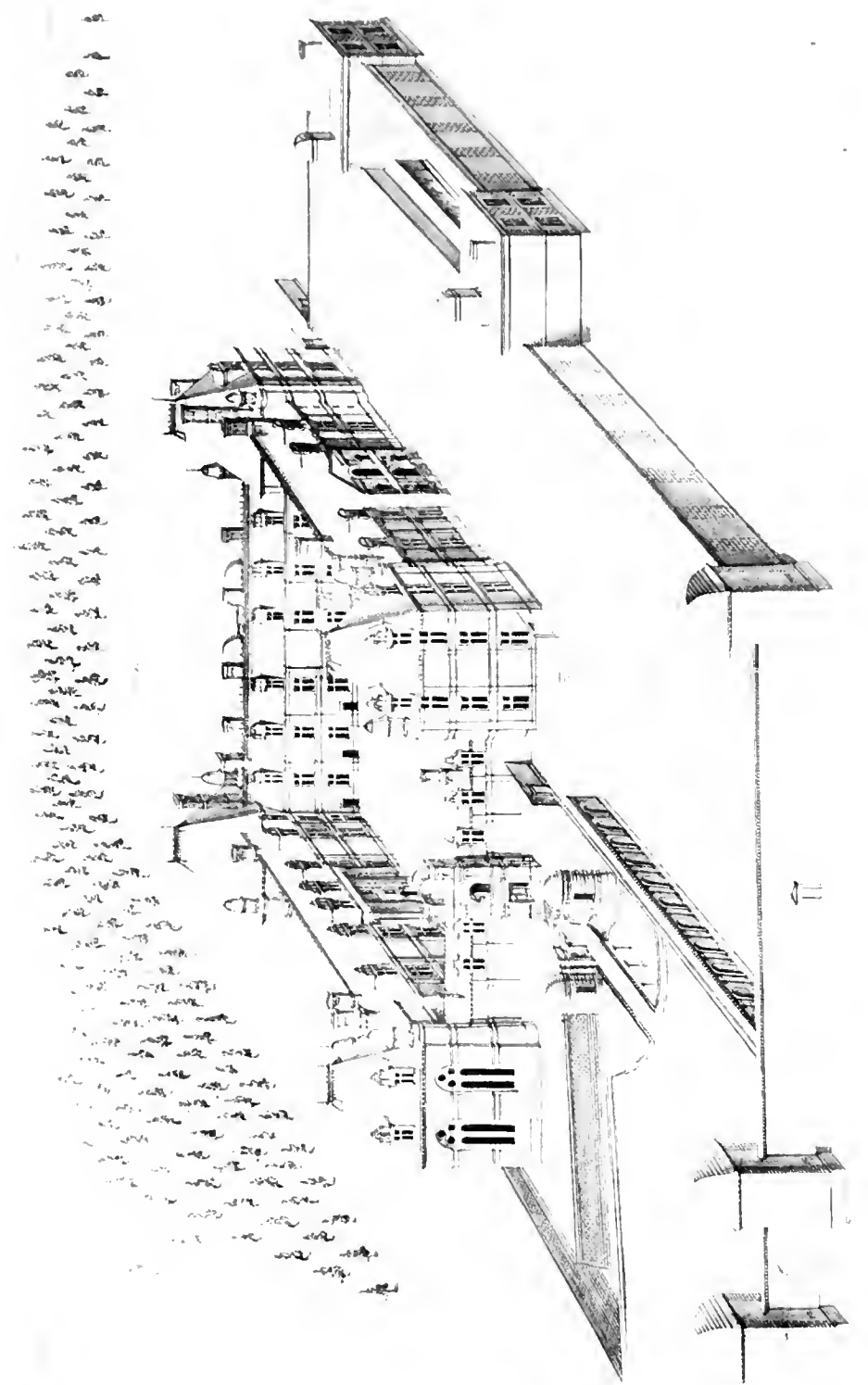
<sup>1</sup> If, however, the dormers are by Billard, this criticism must be modified. These are of great size and finely designed. They are flanked by Doric pilasters, with a frieze of triglyphs and alternate disks and bucrania, with an elaborate frontispiece above. They are more refined and accomplished than any at Fontainebleau, but I incline to think these were added by Bullant.

<sup>2</sup> In this account I have followed Palustre, who was the first to point out the difference between the earlier work of Billard 1532-42, and the additions of the frontispieces inside the court and on the façade to the terrace built by Bullant. Palustre puts the date of these additions at 1550.

<sup>3</sup> Ecouen is now used as a school for the daughters of officers of the Legion of Honour, and can only be seen by permission of the Chancellery of the order.



[Dessiné par M. L.]



ECOLEN (P. 61)



openings on the entrance front have materially altered the character of the design. As it now stands, Ancy-le-Franc is uniform and symmetrical, a great lump of a building, seriously handicapped by its site. Unlike Ecouen, it stands on flat ground, surrounded by what the guide books call "un beau jardin anglais," that is, grounds devoid of any interest, and laid out without the slightest consideration of the building. There is no doubt that the very dull and even triste impression produced by this great house is to some extent due to its unsuitable surroundings. The plan consists of a square quadrangle, measuring internally ninety feet by ninety, with square projecting pavilions at each of the four angles; the total length of the façades is about 193 feet. The centre part of the façades is in two storeys with a steep-pitched roof and dormer windows. The four angle pavilions are carried up three storeys, with pyramidal roofs originally surmounted by open lanterns. As at Fontainebleau the external walls have entablatures at the level of each storey with flat pilasters between each of the windows and a modillion cornice below the springing of the roof. The façades of the interior towards the court are more elaborate. The flat pilaster treatment is followed, but an attempt has been made to gain variety by means of arcades, and by grouping the pilasters in pairs, with panels of black marble between them on the ground floor, and niches with shells on the first floor. In its effort at rhythm and its severe simplicity of surface treatment Ancy-le-Franc is an advance on the disorderly methods of the earlier Renaissance. The original design has been attributed both to Primaticcio and to Serlio. It is practically certain that Primaticcio had nothing to do with the design of the building, though he was employed in its internal decoration. Over a garden door is the date 1546,<sup>1</sup> and at that date at any rate he was not recognized as an architect. Serlio, on

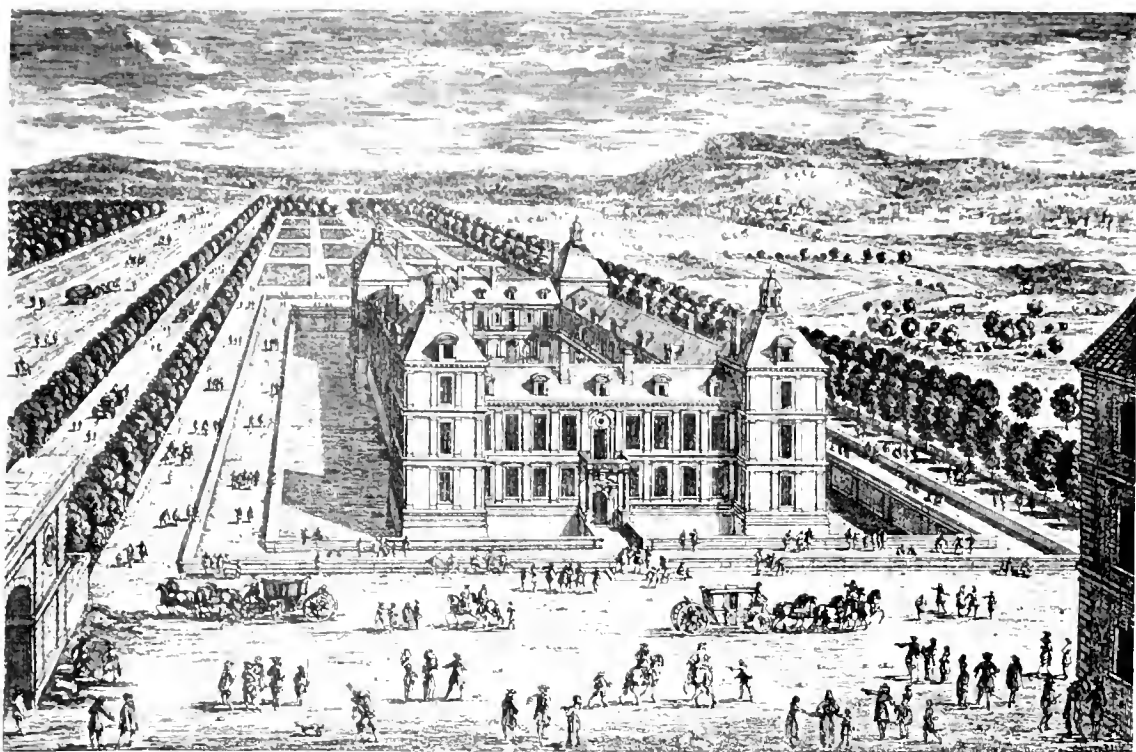
<sup>1</sup> Ancy-le-Franc was built between 1537 and 1546 by Antoine, Comte de Clermont, who married Françoise, sister of Diane de Poitiers. The decorations were not completed till 1578 (Sauvageot, iv, 97). Alterations were made by Antoine's grandson who substituted nine windows for the five of the original façade, and again under Louis XIV, when the property was sold to his minister Louvois. A good deal of damage was done during the Revolution. In 1844 the property was bought back by the family of Clermont-Tonnerre, and the reconstitution of the house in its present state has been carried out since that date. Chaillon des Barres, "Les Châteaux d'Ancy-le-Franc, de St. Fargeau, de Chastellux et de Tanlay," Paris, 1845, states that Ancy-le-Franc was begun in 1555, but he must have overlooked the date 1546. This writer also greatly admired the filling up of the moat and the destruction of the gardens designed by Lenotre which was in full swing at the time he wrote. His account of the château is worthless. Some of the treatises of the middle of the last century dealing with old French manors, seem to have been written with one eye on the buildings, and the other on the powers that be.

the other hand, had been appointed architect to the King for his buildings at Fontainebleau in 1541, and the resemblance of the court to the "plate" in Serlio's architecture, already noted, make it probable that Serlio designed the façades of the inner court at Ancy-le-Franc.<sup>1</sup> There can be little doubt, on the other hand, that Primaticcio at any rate inspired the first scheme of decorations. The earlier work<sup>2</sup> was carried out by Niccolo dell' Abate and his men, and, in spite of injuries and restorations, gives a far better idea of Primaticcio's manner than Fontainebleau. The *Chambre des Arts* is panelled half way up the walls, and above this the various arts are painted in ovals surmounted by arabesques,—Logic, Rhetoric, Music, Geometry, Arithmetic, Grammar, and Astronomy. Next to this is a small room decorated with paintings of single flowers, and over the fireplace a full-length portrait of some Lady of Clermont as Diana in a white dress with a flying red robe, possibly Diane de Poitiers, sister-in-law of Antoine, Count of Clermont Tonnerre. But the characteristic example of Primaticcio's method is the *Salle de Diane*, on the ground floor next the *Salle des Empereurs Romains*. The date on the ceiling of this and of the adjoining *Salle des Empereurs*, 1578, shows that it was completed after Primaticcio's death, but that artist's authorship is written all over the design.<sup>3</sup> The ceiling is vaulted, without ribs, and the whole of the decoration is painted. Long balusters in red and yellow run along the diagonals of the intersecting vaults, and the surface of the vaulting is covered with all sorts of details in red, green, and yellow, on a white ground with some gilding, birds, animals, grotesques, gods and goddesses, flowers, butterflies, two men firing a cannon, little temples with figures, motives that may have remained with Primaticcio from the studies of his early days with Giulio Romano. There is an irresistible attraction in these capricious fancies dimly recollected from the antique. Unreal and fantastic as they may be, they possess the freshness and vitality that gives the charm of spring to the work of the earlier Renaissance, when the world was young again and art was not too serious. There is a quality of genuine enjoyment of life in this work that redeems its technical imperfection and gives it a place by itself in art. The *Salle de Diane* is the best example now left in France of the methods of decoration

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter I, p. 19-20. See also Serlio, iii, 142 and iv, xxx, ed. Venice, 1551.

<sup>2</sup> The later work was carried out by an artist named Meynassier towards the end of the sixteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> M. Dimier denies this, and maintains that the *Chambre des Arts* is the only authentic example of Primaticcio's work at Ancy-le-Franc. "Le Primatice," p. 384.



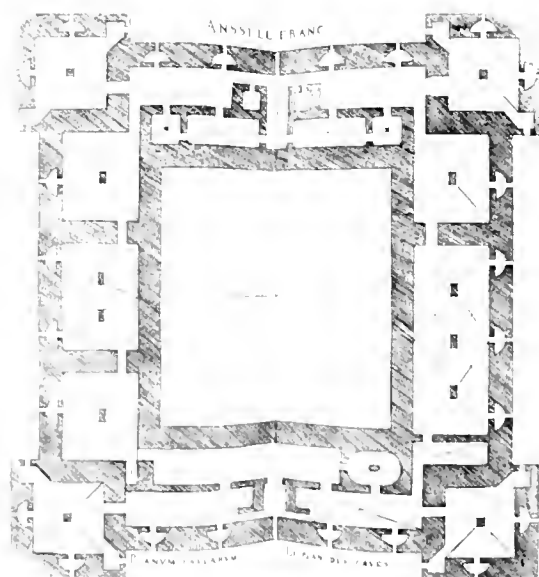
LE CHATEAU D'ANCY-LE-FRANC  
vue de la rue de la Bourgeoisie

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

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[Perelle sc.]

ANCY-LE-FRANC (PP. 20, 62)



ANCY-LE-FRANC: GROUND PLAN (P. 64)

(BY DU CERCLAU)

(The bent lines due to the fold in the original)



pursued by the school of Primaticcio, but except for this, Ancy-le-Franc is a disappointing house. It has been badly restored, and the effect is monotonous. When set off by its moat and terraces, the house may have been impressive by its size, but the architecture must always have been rather timid. It has none of the artless charm of the François Premier manner, none of the vigour and audacity of the work that was to follow it.

The houses to which I have referred may be taken as typical of the greater houses of the first half of the sixteenth century. France was immensely rich in these houses, and in spite of the fires of the Revolution, and wanton destruction by noble owners, it still possesses many notable examples. The reign of François I was perhaps the age *par excellence* of country-house building in France, and building was not confined to the great nobles. The new men who worked their way to the front built freely, and were enabled to do so by the peculiar political conditions of the time. The finances of the kingdom were to a large extent run by an informal syndicate of wealthy persons, who, provided they found the King money when called upon to do so, were able to do more or less what they liked with the rest. It was only when the supplies gave out that the King arose in his wrath, and, as in the case of Semblançay and Jean de Poncher, beheaded the minister and confiscated his property. The "Treasurers of France" and "Generals of Finance" were closely related. The families of Berthelot, of Semblançay, of Bohier, of Briçonnet and of Poncher, were related, and all connected with the finances; next to the King, these men were the chief house builders of the first half of the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Semblançay, who was the son of a rich merchant and banker at Tours, was a banker and bill discounter on a large scale. In 1518 he was given charge of all the finances of the kingdom, and was thus the first of those "surintendants de finances" who played such an important and often disastrous part in the history of the next hundred and fifty years. The house that Semblançay built himself at Tours is still standing,<sup>2</sup> though little of interest remains, except some elaborate ornament on

<sup>1</sup> Lemonnier, "Histoire de France," v, 228-235. M. Lemonnier says, "Les plus beaux châteaux de la première Renaissance ont été, presque tous, construits ou commencés par des financiers." This is not quite correct, as to the financiers would have to be added churchmen, such as Georges d'Amboise, men of the sword, such as Anne de Montmorency, and lawyers who rose to ecclesiastical eminence, such as Duprat.

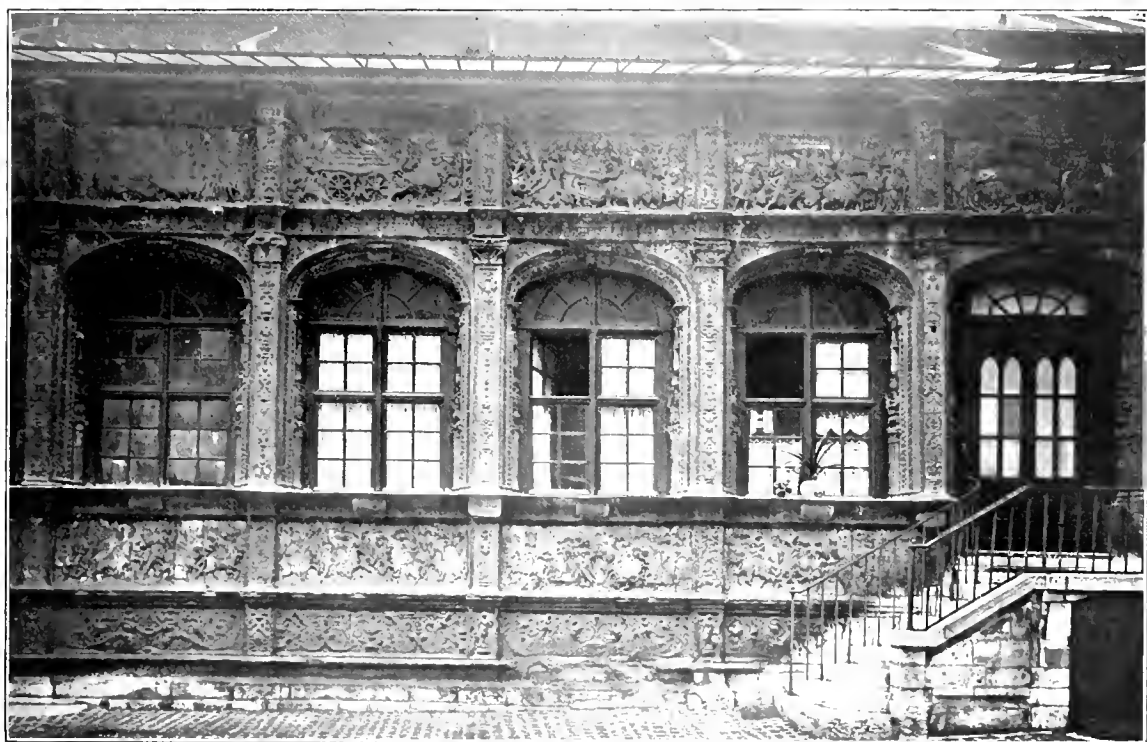
<sup>2</sup> On the south side of the Rue Nationale at Tours, close to the church of St. François de Paule.

the exterior. The ambitions and ideals of these men did not as a rule rise beyond lavish decoration. The result is that few of their buildings, in spite of the richness of their detail, have much individuality. They leave on the mind an impression of arabesques and little figures, and generally of a certain fanciful ingenuity in ornament, but scarcely one among them stands out as the embodiment of a great architectural conception. It would be easy to multiply instances. The Hôtel Gouin at Tours, the Hôtel Pincè at Angers, the Hôtel Lallemant at Bourges, all show the same defect of piecemeal thinking. The ornament is good, often exquisitely delicate, but what does it all mean? What value has it in the architecture of the building, taken as a whole? The appeal that it makes is not that of the architect, but of the cabinet maker, nay, even of the silversmith, and behind this habit of mind lurks that deep-rooted fallacy that architecture consists in the heaping-up of detail. Perhaps the most amazing example of this is the Hôtel Bourgtheroulde at Rouen. The façade in the courtyard starts from a lofty plinth, above which it is divided into six bays by pedestals and pilasters between the windows. Above and below the windows are sculptured panels, those below representing the Field of the Cloth of Gold, those above Petrarch's triumphs of Love. Every inch of the surface is covered with carving, but it is perfectly monotonous, there is little consideration of values and relative relief, and no differentiation in weight made between the various parts of the design. As for the architecture, it is in fact nothing but a frame for the anecdotes of the sculptor. It has been suggested that the panels were carried out by Frenchmen from cartoons made for the Arras weavers. The explanation is probable enough and would be an apt illustration of the state of mind of the French ornamentalist of the time. These men did not think of sculpture as having a definite function in relation to architecture. Ornament to them was ornament and all important, and it had to be got in somehow, even if the frieze and the arabesque had to stop in the middle of the pattern, and even though the architectural value of the sculpture at some distance was no more effective than that of a surface punched with holes. Nor again did it seem to be considered that a design which might be suitable for tapestry worked in the flat, would have to go through a fresh process of transmutation before it could be suitable for sculpture. At the time these buildings were erected French architecture was still in a state of chaos, if not of absolute coma. The mediaeval tradition was rapidly failing, and as yet there was nobody engrained in a tradition of Neo-Classic, such as would enable him to express himself freely and logically





BEAUGENCY: HÔTEL DE VILLE (P. 67)



HÔTEL BOURGHIÉROULT, POITIERS: FACADE EN COURTYARD (P. 66)



in the terms and idioms of the new manner. The consequence was that the ornamentalists and the builders were largely dependent on the versions supplied them by draughtsmen. They did not really understand the ornament they were using, or know how and where to place it, and on the other hand they had lost the instinctive sense of style of the mediaeval artist. The position was much the same as that which, to a large extent, prevails in the architecture of the present day. Later on a genuine tradition of Neo-Classic design was to be formed; just as two hundred years earlier there had been a genuine tradition of mediaeval art, with the result that both in mediaeval work and later Neo-Classic, architecture and its ornament did their work naturally and easily, taking their appointed place in an organic scheme without effort and inevitably. In the first half of the sixteenth century in France, work which was still under the spell of the old tradition shows more architectural sense than the crude experiments of the early Renaissance. The old Hôtels de Ville of Orléans and Beaugency, built by Charles Viart, whoever designed them, show far more sense of architecture than such buildings as the Hôtel Bourgtheroulde.

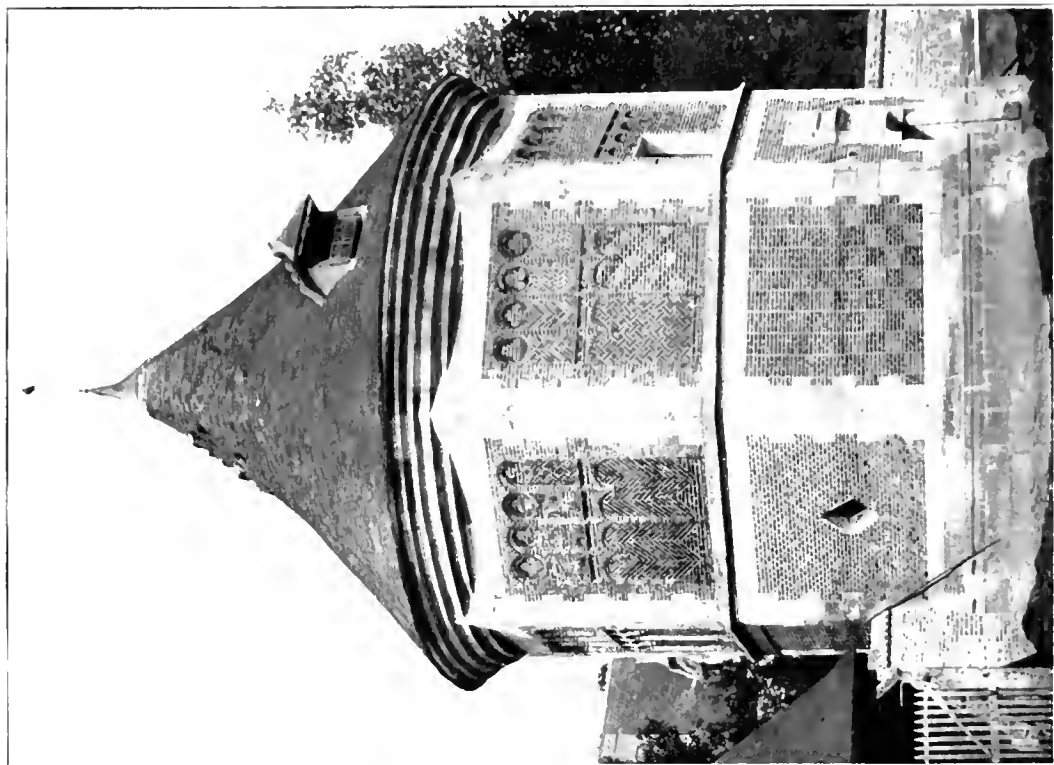
There are signs, however, of a real advance towards the end of the reign. In 1538 Nicholas de Valois built the Hôtel d'Ecoville at Caen, perhaps the most mature and accomplished of all the buildings erected during the reign of François I. The façades are wanting in breadth, the long attenuated columns, eleven diameters high, are unhappy, and there is a certain monotony in the proportions, but the man who designed it really was an architect, he was capable of leaving a wall alone, and of relying for his effect on rhythm and proportion and refinement of detail, rather than on an inordinate profusion of carving.<sup>1</sup> It is an astonishing fact that such a building should have been erected within fifty yards of Sohier's church, and within twenty years of its date, and it proves once more that there was as yet no such thing as a school or tradition of Neo-Classic in France. Each building was an individual experiment, but though uncertain and irregular, a certain progression can be traced, and out of these tentative efforts the idea of architecture as something more than building plus ornament was slowly emerging.

It is to be noted that in one respect this advance in technical knowledge was not wholly to the good. With increased knowledge came a tendency to preciousness, and a certain impatience of material, which perhaps accounts for the ultimate disappearance of what might

<sup>1</sup> The Hôtel de Duval de Mondrainville in the Rue de la Monnaie, Caen, is probably by the same hand as the Hôtel d'Ecoville.

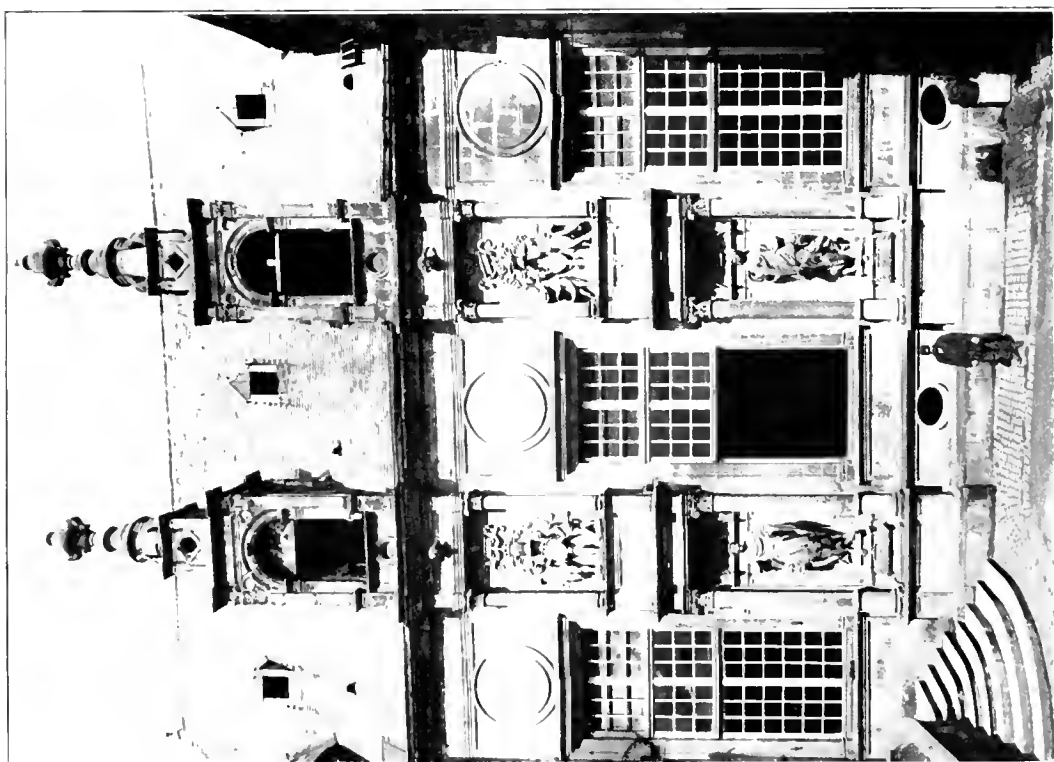
have been a delightful motive in French architecture. In certain parts of France, and notably in Normandy and along the valley of the lower Seine, instances remain of buildings which, to a great extent, relied for their effect on their materials. We have seen how, in the Château de Madrid, enamelled terra-cotta had been used by Della Robbia, but elsewhere the builders had combined stone and bricks, red and black, and used knapped flints with beautiful results. In the archbishop's palace at Sens (1521-35), stone is used for the walls on the ground floor, and for the ornament and dressed work; but the walls in the upper part are in red brick, diapered with darker bricks. Other examples are to be found in the château of Auffay, near Harfleur, where the walls are faced with patterns of black and white flints squared, and bricks of different colours in zig-zags, lozenges, chevrons, and the like. At Montigny (Eure et Loire) chequers of brick and stone are freely used in the upper storeys, and at Gonfreville l'Orcher (Seine Inférieure) the brick work with stone dressings is diapered. All sorts of designs and materials were employed in the great sixteenth-century columbaries of Normandy. The columbary of Boos is octagon in plan, but a boldly moulded cornice circular in plan is developed out of the upper part in order to admit of the conical tiled roof. The walls have stone quoins and string-courses, the lower storey is filled in with patterns of red, and dark green glazed bricks in squares and diapers, the upper part is panelled with tracery in hollow chamfered bricks, filled in with various arrangements of green, red,<sup>1</sup> black and yellow bricks. There is a fine example, rather later in date, at Ste. Marguerite (Seine Inférieure), and the famous example at the Manoir d'Ango near Dieppe, which measures some 27 feet in diameter and is built in brick with patterns in stone, black and red bricks and knapped flints. The Manoir d'Ango is itself the most remarkable example in France and the north of Europe of the possibilities of effect to be obtained by the dexterous use of materials. The buildings form an immense courtyard, quadrangular in plan but not set out as a rectangle, the entrances are at the ends of the two long sides, the house occupying the south and part of the east sides and the farm buildings the rest. To the left of the main entrance is a Loggia with arches in four bays brought direct on to the capitals of sturdy little columns. Above this arcade runs a band of stone with alternate disks and lozenges, above which the windows of the gallery

<sup>1</sup> These bricks measure 8 by  $3\frac{3}{4}$  by  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches, and go five courses to  $10\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height. The date is early sixteenth century. Each side of the octagon measures 11 feet 6 inches. Boos lies 13 kilometres south-east of Rouen.



ÉGLISE DE SAINT-NICOLAS, COMPIÈGNE

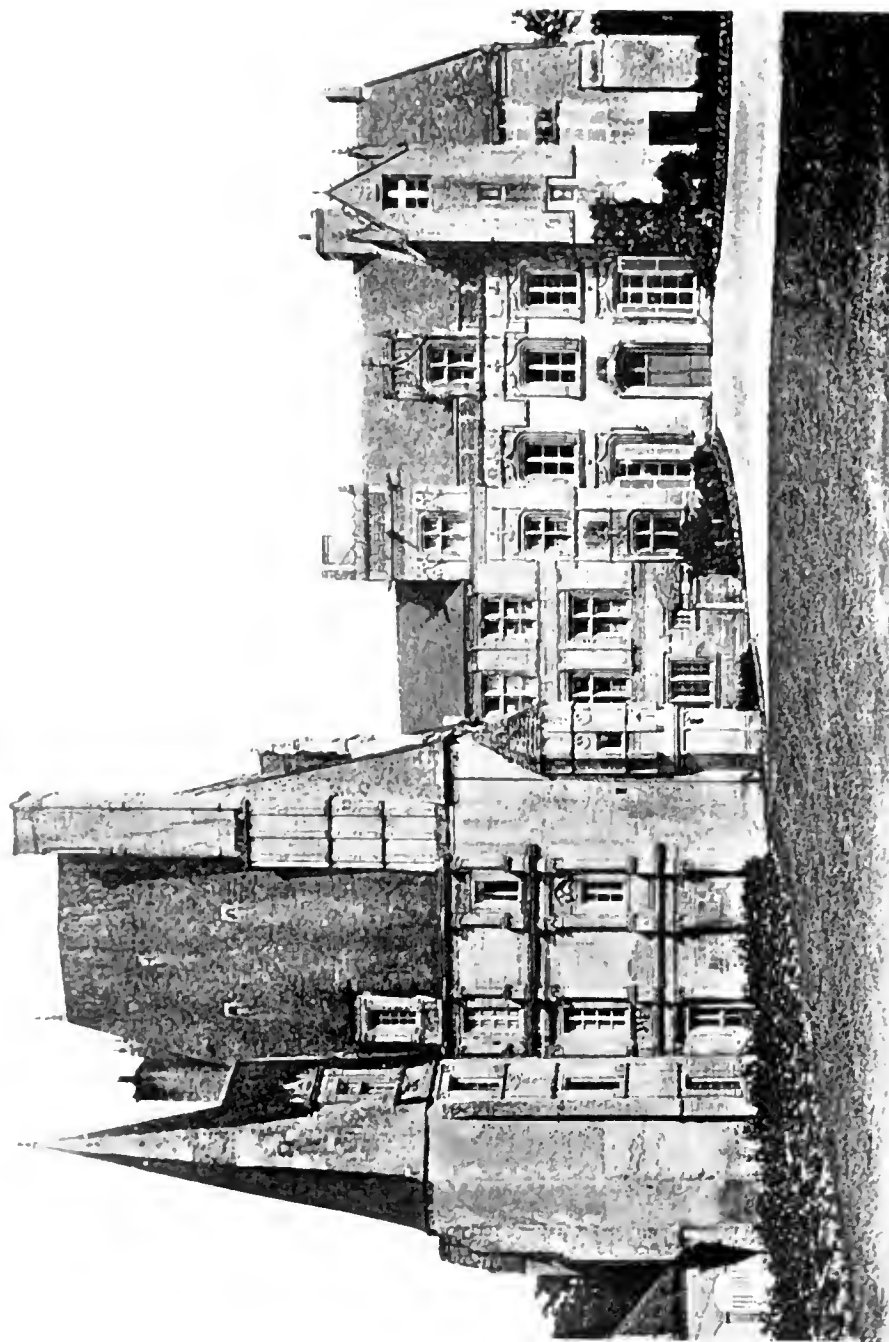
Fig. 4



ÉGLISE DE SAINT-NICOLAS, COMPIÈGNE

Fig. 5





Château de FONTAINE-HENRI (XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle)

FONTAINE-HENRI (P. 601)

ND. phot





run up to the underside of the eaves, the wall spaces between being decorated with chevrons and diapers of stone and knapped flints, of admirable workmanship and very delicate details throughout. This treatment in a plainer form is continued along the west side. Along the north side the walls are of oak, half timber and plaster, with the great columbary standing some 20 feet out from the north wall. The roofs, except some thatching on the west side, are covered with a beautiful brown tile, laid very close, and showing not more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches on face. The Manoir d'Ango was built for Jean d'Ango, the famous shipbuilder and merchant adventurer who equipped expeditions to explore the new world, and something of his sturdy character seems to have expressed itself in his house. There is no record of any designer, probably d'Ango and his workmen designed it as they went, for the buildings are quite irregular and even spasmodic in their design, as if a succession of experiments had been made and abandoned. The part by the entrance proceeds for two bays in a regular design, which, however, has no relation to the Loggia, and after two bays stops abruptly. It is a matter for regret that in later work this play of materials was, to a large extent, abandoned. Brick and stone were of course used freely in combination early in the seventeenth century and even later, but the tendency of Neo-Classic was to ignore materials, and to concentrate on abstract design. The deliberate employment of materials for their colour or texture has dropped out of French architecture, which appears to consider that with its admirable masonry everything can be said that is worth saying.

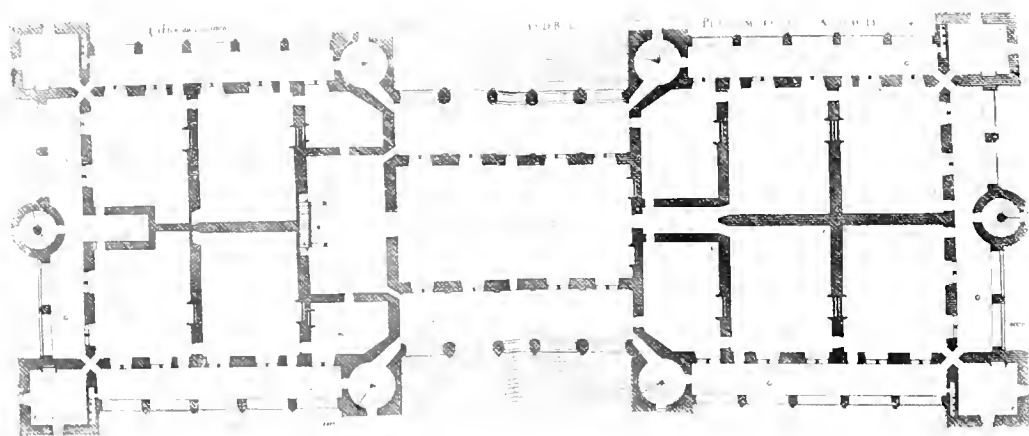
On the other hand, the same instinct for pure form, irrespective of colour and texture, led French architects to preserve and develop very skilfully the mountainous roof which was French in origin and the legacy of mediaeval tradition. The roofs of the square pavilions of Valençay and of Villandry (about 1540), the enormous roof and chimney-stacks of Fontaine-Henri (1537) are memorable examples. These are directly derived from mediaeval architecture through buildings such as Maintenon and Martainville. It is possible, as De l'Orme asserted, that the master-builders adhered to these precipitous roofs because they had no idea how to form a trussed principle for roofs of wider span, and were limited by the length of their tie-beams. None the less they produced effects of astonishing quality with the roofs of their towers and pavilions, and the architects of the later Renaissance wisely availed themselves of this suggestive motive.

I need hardly say that, in this rapid survey, I have only referred

to typical examples of the early Renaissance in France. There are countless minor buildings and alterations and additions to churches, of very great interest in detail, but in no sense epoch-making, which range themselves under one or other of the types which I have endeavoured to define. We have now to sum up the positive result of the fifty years of experiment which ended with the death of François I in 1547, and it amounts to this. The influence of the Italian artists was limited to details of ornament and decoration. The master-builders were good men in their way, but neither by training nor attainment qualified to further the progress of architecture along the path on which, for good or for evil, it was now finally entering. The amateurs, François himself, the churchmen and noblemen who were at the back of the new movement, were, in architecture at any rate, the blind leading the blind. A careful examination of the buildings erected in France in the first fifty years of the sixteenth century, leads to the conclusion that the positive contribution of that age to architecture was small. No tradition of Neo-Classic had, as yet, established itself, and the direct interposition of the amateur had the usual result of withdrawing attention from the essential qualities of architecture, and concentrating all the skill and craftsmanship available on detail of a peculiarly meaningless kind. The only advance, so far, was made in house-planning. The fortified house was abandoned, and the usual arrangement in large houses was the courtyard plan, with sides of single thickness, access from room to room on the upper floors, and an open cloister or arcade on the ground floor. An attempt was made to obviate the inconvenience of going from room to room by means of newel staircases in several parts of the building, but servants must have spent most of their time on the stairs, and a real advance was made with the development of the plan "tout un masse," as Du Cerceau calls it, that is, a plan which grouped rooms on either side of corridors, as at Chenonceaux and Chambord. Bohier's building at Chenonceaux is, in the main lines of its plan, viz., a central corridor with rooms on either side, very similar to that of Martainville, built some forty years before, and the latter house is, in spite of its Gothic detail, the real starting-point of modern domestic planning in France. Indeed, the fact that no very notable advance was made on this plan for the next three generations, and that Du Cerceau, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, should have considered a plan "tout un masse" as remarkable, shows how exclusively the attention of builders and their patrons was concentrated on ornament.

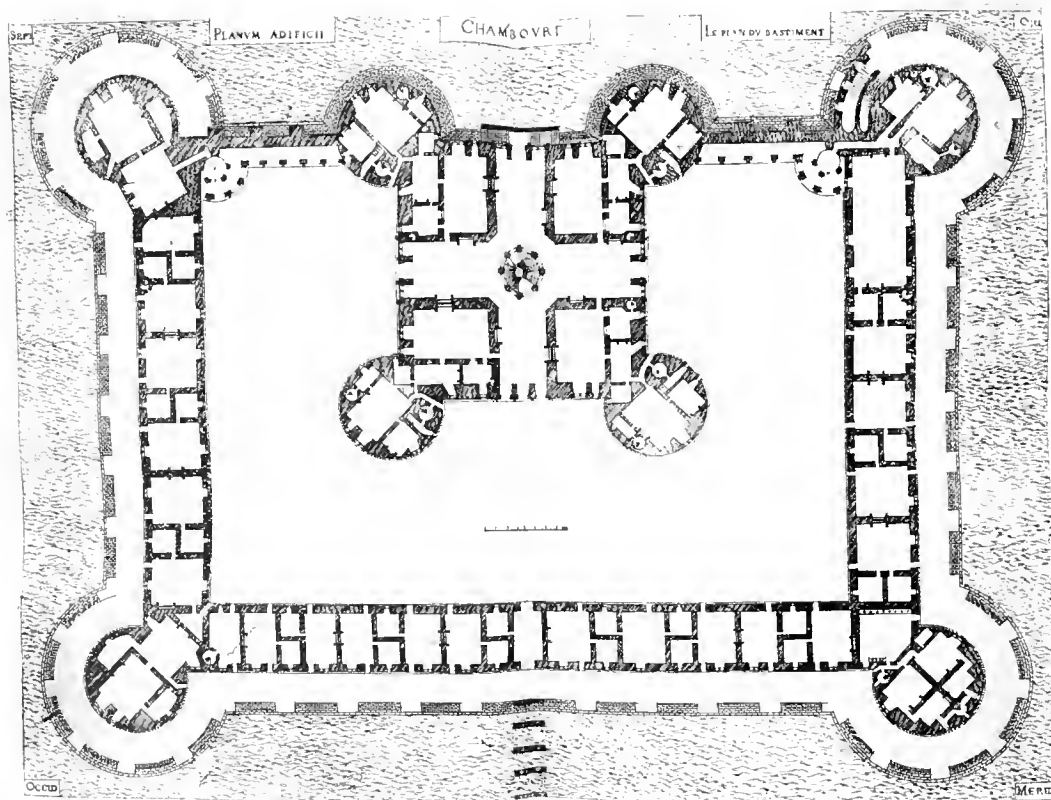
At Chambord the general plan of the centre block is square with





[Du Cerceau]

GROUND PLAN: CHATEAU DE MADRID (P. 71)



[Du Cerceau]

CHAMBORD: GROUND PLAN (P. 71)

four large circular towers engaged at the angles. The square is divided into four equal compartments by four broad corridors, running north, south, east, and west, with the famous double staircase at the point of intersection in the centre. Each of the compartments contains a complete suite of three rooms, a large room opening on to the main corridor, and two smaller. The towers at the four angles also contain a complete suite on each floor, a larger and a smaller room, a garde-robe and newel staircases to each tower. The result was that on each floor there were eight complete suites of rooms with staircases, in addition to the central stairs and corridors. A real, though not entirely successful, attempt was made here to get light and air and proper access to the various rooms; the corridors were spacious and well-lit, and the rooms fairly proportioned. On the other hand, there is no access from the tower rooms to the corridors, except through other rooms, and an immense amount of material was wasted in the attempt to get square rooms out of the circular towers. Nor would any architect with an eye for vista have blocked his corridors by placing that vast staircase in the centre.

At the Château de Madrid the suites of rooms, each with their separate staircase, were arranged at the four angles of a central hall with a main staircase between the suites leading from one side of the hall, and here for the first time mezzanine rooms were introduced to make up the height of the central hall over lower rooms. The scheming of the plans of the Château de Madrid was indeed more remarkable in every way than its unsuitable decoration.

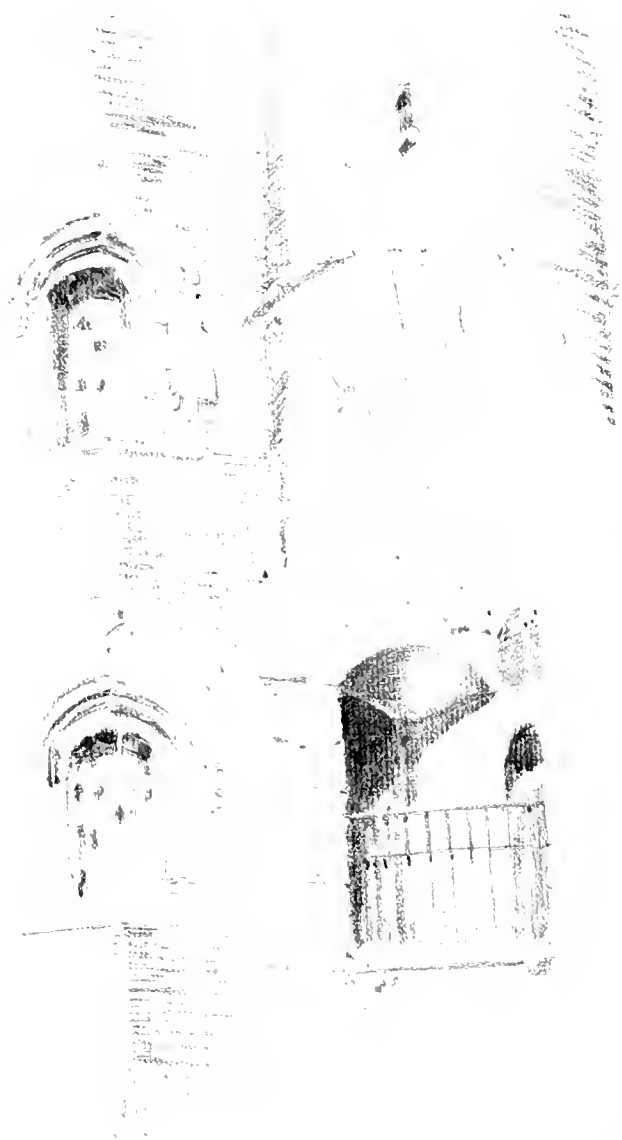
Some tentative advance was also made in staircases. The staircases of Chambord, of Blois, of Chateaudun, and of La Rochefoucauld, were, as it were, the apotheosis of the newel staircase of the Middle Ages. Nothing further was to be done in this direction. But for the first time the straight staircase with parallel flights appears in important houses as at Villers Cotteret and in the work done for François I at the Louvre, but no one attempted a staircase with an open well till De l'Orme designed the famous staircase of the Tuileries.

The result, so far, is disappointing. Scientific, or rather imaginative, planning did not exist. Neither owners nor builders had, as yet, any idea of the possibility open to skilful design in the shaping of rooms and their placing, in the use of the vista and the axis line. And it is here that the earlier Renaissance in France fell so far behind contemporary architecture in Italy. French masonry was better than Italian, French ornament at its best was nearly as good, but at the time that

François was building Villers Cotteret and Fontainebleau, San Michele had built the gateways of Verona, Raphael had designed the hall of the Villa Madama, and Peruzzi was completing the Palazzo Massimi at Rome. Compared with these buildings, masterpieces which owe their distinction to their pure architectural quality, the architecture of François I was merely provincial. There are people who prefer the accidental and the picturesque to the strength and dignity of serious architecture, and there is an insidious charm in the historical associations of these time-worn buildings, some glamour of the gallant men and beautiful women who once lived and fought and intrigued in the very rooms through which we wander to this day. But this glamour should not blind the critical eye. The student of architecture must judge by those standards which are set by the acknowledged masterpieces of the world, and by those standards the art of François I is tried and found wanting. Yet it, too, had done its work. Out of this welter of experiment will emerge a purer and more masculine art, that splendid version of French Neo-Classic which was to reach its full maturity at the end of the seventeenth century. "*Quand on a parcouru ce cycle de trente années, ou tant de choses furent essayées, abandonnées, combattues, admirées, et où il semble qu'il y ait tant de contradictions entre les faits et les théories, on emporte cependant de l'étude de la littérature, de la pédagogie, et de l'art une impression assez nette à une condition cependant, distinguer dans la pensée du temps ce qu'elle a réalisé avant 1547, et ce qu'elle fait prévoir. Dans l'œuvre réalisée, tout se juxtapose, ou se mêle—génie français, génie du moyen âge, génie italien, génie de l'antiquité . . . mais . . . une nouvelle forme, de penser s'annonce, très prochaine, où la tradition du moyen âge, et même l'esprit du temps de François I disparaîtra définitivement devant le pur classicisme.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lemonnier, "*Hist. de France*," v, 1, 338.





Temple  
 that formerly was  
 a chapel of the  
 hospital & now  
 a church of the  
 city of Angoulême

[R. B. del.]

FROMPE: HÔTEL BERNUY, TOULOUSE (P. 76 note)



## CHAPTER V

PHILIBERT DE L'ORME

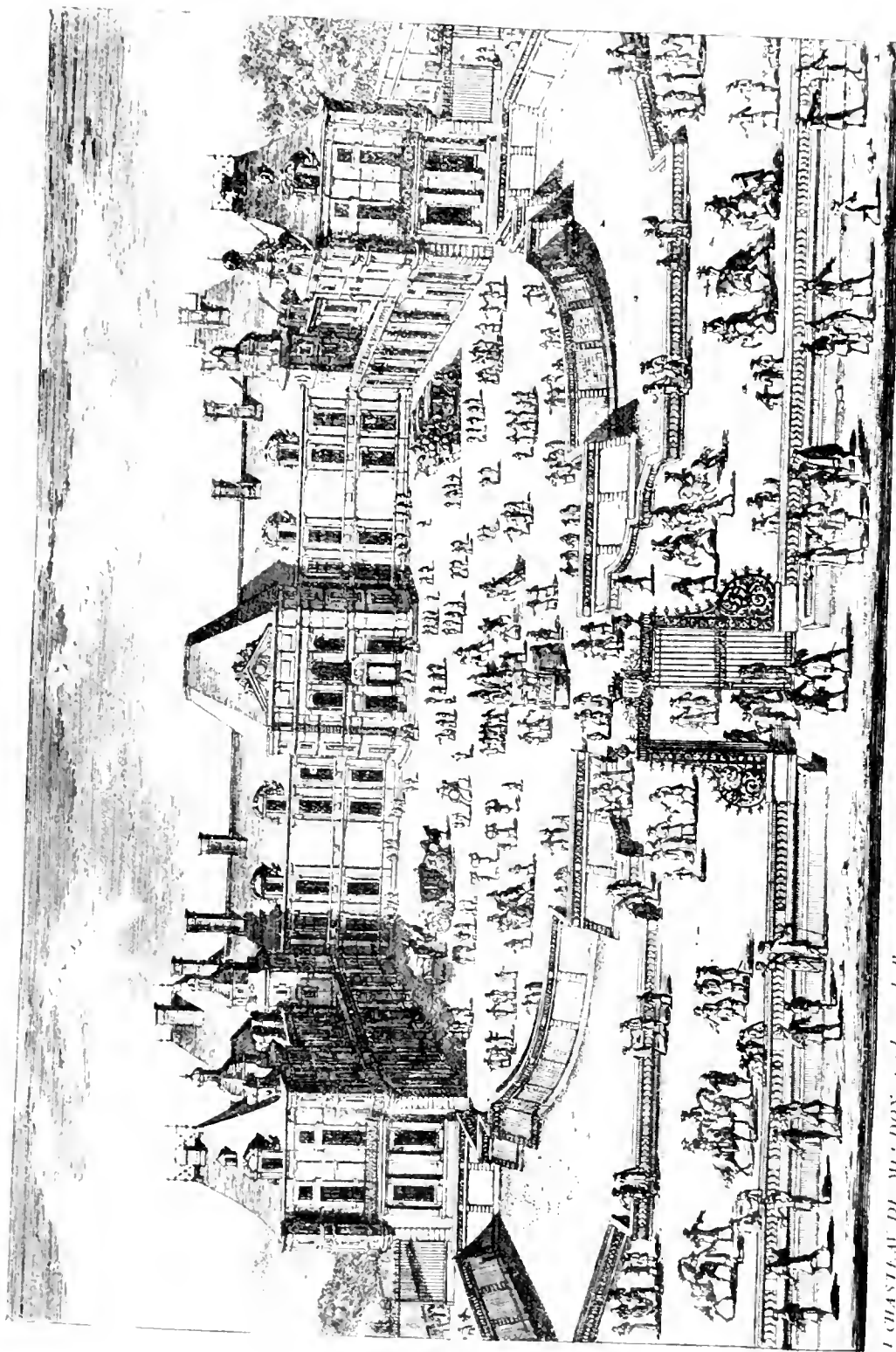
FRANÇOIS I died in 1547. His death closed a definite period of history, and released forces which so far had lain in abeyance, owing to certain qualities in the King himself. François was a man of restless energy, considerable capacity, and the instincts of an artist. As I have already pointed out, he took the control of the arts into his own hands, designed his own houses, so far as it was possible for an amateur to do so, and showed a close personal interest in the labours of the artists who thronged his courts at Blois or Fontainebleau, at St. Germain-en-Laye or the Château de Madrid. But this princely patronage was not an unmixed benefit. The Renaissance in France in its earlier stages was an exotic, not a natural growth, it relied for its support on the King; and in the absence of any accepted standard of architecture, and of any competent and recognized architectural authority it was subject to the caprice and imperfect knowledge of the Court. To a certain extent the King's artistic temperament defeated itself, in that it allowed no elbow-room for the trained and competent artist. With the useless exception of Leonardo, who ended his days in extreme old age in France, he failed to retain permanently in his service any first-rate Italian artist. Andrea del Sarto ran away, Cellini left in a rage, Serlio was ultimately stranded at Fontainebleau with nothing to do, Primaticcio only emerged into first-rate prominence long after François' death. The Hôtel de Petit Nesle, was ill organized and badly administered, and ended in unseemly scandals. The results of François' ventures in Italianism were a series of false starts; and when he died, architecture had not advanced very far beyond the point at which he took it up thirty years before, unless it was in a widely diffused interest in the art, and possibly a growing consciousness that architecture meant something more than a series of futile variations in detail.

His son, Henri II, was a morose and melancholy man, whose only resemblance to his father seems to have consisted in a passion for hunt-

ing and violent exercise. His infatuation for Diane de Poitiers was the one absorbing affair of his life, prompting and colouring all his actions, even to the dwarfing of his moral and intellectual energies. Instead of the humanism, the fine expansiveness of François, Henri never broke through the narrow limits of his one idea; and yet, by a curious process of compensation, this obsession certainly helped the development of the arts. Henri no longer took any personal part in their direction. He handed over these matters to his deputies, very much to the advantage of his treasury, and incidentally of architecture. De l'Orme considered that one of his principal services to the King had been his exposure of the constant robberies by the contractors for the royal buildings, and there can be little doubt that the affairs of François I had got into a terrible tangle, and that, owing to the lack of competent supervision by independent officials the master-builders had taken full advantage of this state of chaos. Nor was it only the master-builders who robbed and embezzled. Every hanger-on at the Court found his chance in the King's mania for building, and as the Venetian ambassador shrewdly observed, the King's buildings were never finished, as their completion would have terminated several lucrative appointments. Henri's indifference to the arts and his consciousness of the failure of his father's methods, were the opportunity of the younger generation.

I have already indicated the conclusions to which the evidence leads as to the status and competence of the master-builders. Meanwhile a different class of men had been growing up, men who had deliberately devoted themselves to the art of architecture, who had qualified themselves by study on the spot of the antiquities of Rome, and who applied the new enthusiasm for scholarship to researches in the monuments of the ancient world. These men were not contractors, they did not set out to be tradesmen. They were pioneers in what, to them, was an intensely fascinating art, an art which they approached with a zeal and ardour of conviction not inferior, in its way, to that which inspired Ronsard and Du Bellay in literature, or Etienne and Amyot in scholarship.

Such a man was Philibert de l'Orme—the most interesting and original figure of that brilliant group of artists who appeared on the stage after the death of François I and held it with varying fortune for the next thirty years. De l'Orme was born at Lyons about 1515. The exact date is not known, and the year 1515 is inferred from a passage in the preface to his “*Treatise on Architecture*,” published in 1567, in which he states certain observations as the results of his study of

[illegible]



building for thirty-five years and more. He further states <sup>1</sup> that from his earliest youth he had devoted himself to new inventions, consulting the most learned men in Europe in geometry and the sciences necessary for architecture, and noting and measuring the most excellent antiquities: "and thereby," he continues, "I have, by the grace of God, made such excellent progress that I have designed and built temples, châteaux, palaces and houses in the true manner of architecture, for the King, for princes and cardinals, as well as others, and this from the age of fifteen years, when I began to have the charge and direction of three hundred men." De l'Orme was never unduly modest about his own attainments, and the older he got, the larger they grew in his memory. His father is said to have been a contractor at Lyons,<sup>2</sup> and the family appears to have belonged to the lower middle class, people of some moderate means, but no particular position. Lyons, however, was the centre of an intellectual life almost as keen as that of Paris; moreover, by its position it was more closely in touch with Italy, and somehow or other the builder's son managed to find his way into Italy, to join the hosts of artists who were diligently occupied in studying the antiquities of Rome. De l'Orme's account of his work there is characteristic. Being at Rome, he says, measuring the buildings and antiquities, it chanced one day, that while he was at work on the Triumphal Arch of "Santa Maria Nove," the Cardinal de Sainte Croix then Bishop, with several Cardinals and noble gentlemen came by, and desired his acquaintance, on the ground that he had seen him, on several occasions, measuring ancient buildings, "which," says De l'Orme, "I did with great labour, charges and expenses, so far as I was able, not only in ladders and ropes, but also in excavating foundations, which I was not able to do without being followed by a number of men, some to earn their two centimes a day, others to learn, for they were workmen, cabinet-makers, carvers, and the like, who wished to know what I was doing, and get the benefit of what I discovered."<sup>3</sup>

The date of this meeting is fixed by the reference to "S. Croix" as between 1534 and 1536. Marcellus Cervinus became a bishop in 1534, but left Rome for France and the Low Countries in 1536

<sup>1</sup> "Nouvelles Inventions," p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Vachon, "Philibert de l'Orme," p. 8, says, "the grandfather was a weaver." Berty, "Les grands Architectes Français de la Renaissance," says that this story was an invention of Callet, most mendacious of antiquaries, but concurs in the opinion that De l'Orme belonged to a family of builders, and was probably related to Pierre and Toussaint de l'Orme, masons who worked at Gaillon.

<sup>3</sup> "Architecture," p. 131.

and did not return to Rome till 1539 when he became Cardinal de Sainte Croix of Jerusalem. De l'Orme was probably about twenty at the date of this meeting. The three hundred men that he says he employed at the age of fifteen have vanished into thin air, but he was on the road to preferment, for his new friends introduced him to the Pope, Paul III, who gave him what he calls "une belle charge à St. Martin dello Bosco" in Calabria. The charge was probably not so good as he says, for he was back at Lyons in 1536,<sup>1</sup> having thrown up his work at the instigation of the Du Bellays.<sup>2</sup> De l'Orme subsequently made a grievance of this against the Du Bellays, but there can be little doubt that it was the turning point of his career. The Du Bellays were an accomplished and very powerful family. William du Bellay, Sieur de Langeais, the head of the house, was famous as a soldier and diplomatist. His brother Jean, the Cardinal, was sent over to England to arrange the difficult situation of Anne Boleyn in relation to the French Court, and was employed on two occasions as ambassador to Rome. It must have been during this second embassy, 1535, that Du Bellay met De l'Orme, and it was through the cardinal that De l'Orme came under the notice of the Court and began a career, the success of which was unbroken till the crash of his fortunes that followed the death of Henri II.

The only known example of De l'Orme's work of this period is the gallery in a courtyard at the back of the Rue Juiverie in Lyons. The gallery runs along one side with quadrant projections in the two re-entering angles carried on two large trompes, of which the south one is complete. A small Doric order with pilasters is surmounted by an Ionic order, and between the pilasters are three windows with elliptical heads. The whole scale of the design is very small and meticulous, though the general proportions are well kept, and the detail is refined. The construction however does not appear to have been so good as De

<sup>1</sup> "Je fis faire tel œuvre (a trompe) l'an 1536, à mon retour de Rome et voyage d'Italie."—"Architecture," p. 90. "A trompe" by the way was an ingenious device of masonry for carrying projecting portions of a building in re-entering angles and was formed of a hollow section of a cone with voussoirs radiating from the centre. The famous "Trompe d'Anet" is described in De l'Orme's fourth book. Another, that of No. 8 Rue de la Juiverie at Lyons is the one referred to in the text and still exists. De l'Orme claimed the invention of the "trompe" but it was commonly used at the time. There is a fine example in the courtyard of the Hôtel Bernay at Toulouse, and a remarkable triple trompe on an external angle is in the Place des Pas Publics at Vannes. At Abbeville there is a square columbarium carried on four trompes springing from a central pier.

<sup>2</sup> "Feu Mons. de Langés (Langeais Guillaume de Bellay) Monsieur le Cardinal son frère, me débauchèrent du service du Pape Paulle."—"Instruction de Monsieur d'Yvry" (de l'Orme), Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," p. 58.



*Pl. 104*

GALLERY AND FROMPE BY DE L'ORME: RUE JUIVERIE, LYONS (P. 76)





PLAN OF THE TEMPLE OF  
SERAPIS AT THEOPHILIA

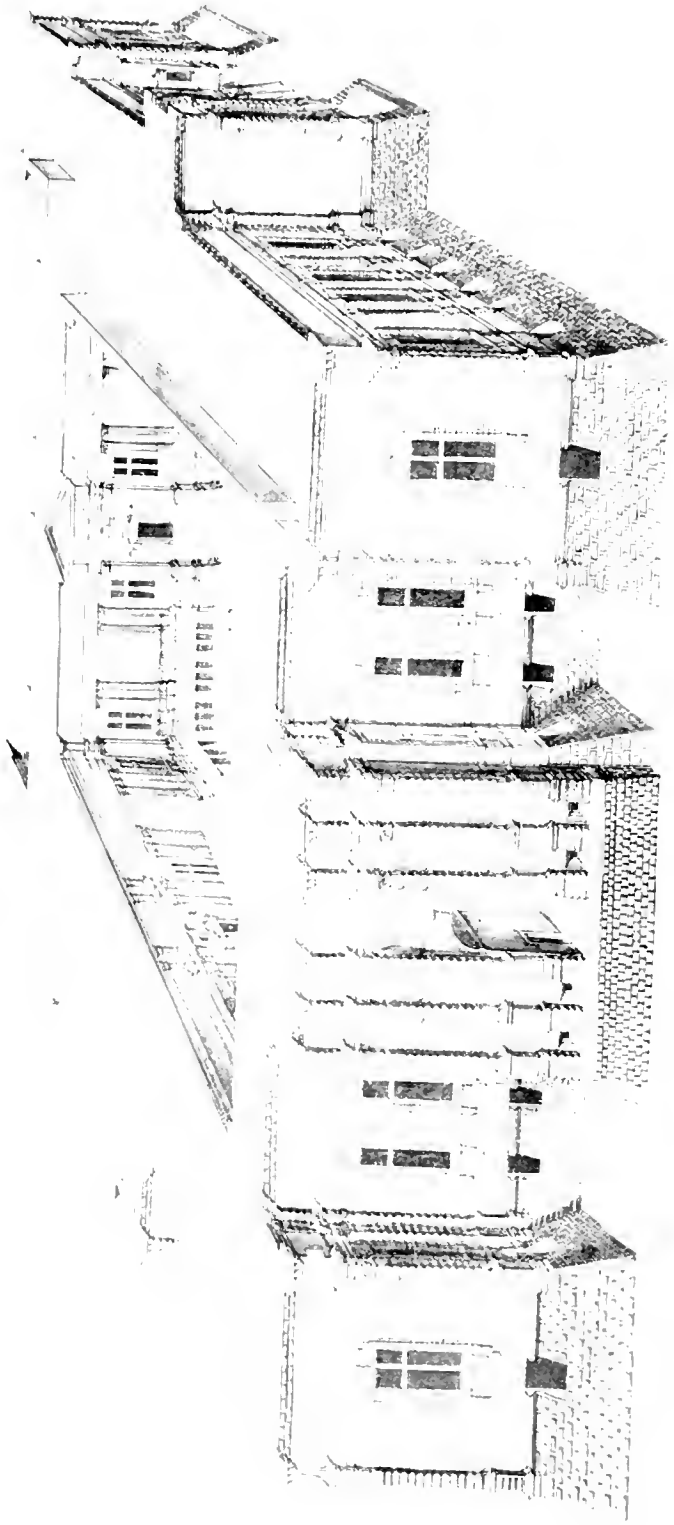


Fig. 1. Plan of the Temple of Serapis at Theophylia.



l'Orme believed, for the two trompes are kept in position by half-pointed arches, back to back, abutting against them.<sup>1</sup> The doorway of St. Nizier at Lyons, which has been attributed to De l'Orme, is certainly not by him. It is not known when De l'Orme moved from Lyons to Paris. Meudon and St. Maur des Fossés were probably his first two important works near Paris. In the engraving of Meudon, which I reproduce, it is stated that Meudon was begun by Cardinal "Sanguin" under François I and finished under Henri II, from the design of Philibert de l'Orme, and that it was added to by the Cardinal de Lorraine, who built the great grotto on which Primaticcio was employed, the house being finally completed by Levau and Hardouin Mansart. In the engraving, traces of De l'Orme's design are evident in the side wings. The design of the grotto, that is of the great building with terraces and staircases, as shown by Perelle and in Le Petit Marot, was, I believe, given by De l'Orme, Primaticcio being employed for the ornament and figure work.

St. Maur des Fossés he owed to Du Bellay. This house stood on ground overlooking the Marne near Charenton. The site was all made ground, and was in fact a mound of earth excavated from an old quarry. De l'Orme says he had to go forty feet down to reach solid ground. In order to save his client's pocket,<sup>2</sup> he sank shafts about four to five feet square, twelve feet apart, down to the firm ground, and built up piers of masonry, and arches from pier to pier, to carry the works above. To us the feat would be ordinary enough, but in view of the haphazard methods of the master-builders the work which De l'Orme did was an important advance towards scientific building, and it is this careful study of building construction and his unusual skill in it, rather than his artistic ability, which justify De l'Orme's considerable reputation as an architect. The constructor was stronger than the artist in De l'Orme. The design which he made for Du Bellay consisted of a façade with a single order of Corinthian pilasters on a lofty pedestal course, with mullioned windows between the pilasters, a complete entablature, and above this a well-designed attic with panels, niches over the pilasters and no openings. The entrance was in the centre, reached by a flight of fourteen steps. The design is, for De l'Orme, quiet in treatment and well-proportioned, and still shows traces of his studies in Italy. Indeed, it is doubtful if De l'Orme ever got back again

<sup>1</sup> This is the only explanation possible of the very curious condition of the fabric as it now stands (1910).

<sup>2</sup> "Qui n'avait pas lors beaucoup d'écus de rente." De l'Orme.

to the fine austerity which governed his first two designs as shown in his own *Livre de l'Architecture* (250 verso) and in Du Cerceau's drawing in the British Museum, a far better version of a one-storey façade than the design that he made for the Tuileries twenty years later. Du Bellay was unable to complete his building, and sold it as it stood to Cathérine de Médicis, who had the design entirely remodelled and carried up the centre façade three storeys, with a prodigious pediment occupying the whole space between the angle pavilions. Du Cerceau pronounced this pediment to be "éclatant," and the biggest of its kind in France. So no doubt it was, but it meant the sacrifice of the reserve, sense of scale and proportion, to which the first design had owed its quality. St. Maur was sold to the creditors of Cathérine de Médicis on her death in 1589. It passed into the possession of the Condé family, and was destroyed before the Revolution. Two views of St. Maur by Perelle were published by Mariette and from these it appears that the house was left unfinished for a hundred years and was only completed in the early part of the reign of Louis XIV, by Gittard for the Prince de Condé, with gardens by Lenotre. In the view of the garden side which I have given, De l'Orme's pediment appears, but the roofs and one of the pavilions were later, and Gittard altered the stairs and windows and removed the central staircase in order to get a vista through from the forecourt to the gardens. It was for the same purpose that Colbert did away with De l'Orme's staircase at the Tuileries.<sup>1</sup>

In 1545, or possibly earlier, De l'Orme was appointed conductor-general of buildings and fortifications in the Duchy of Brittany. His duties consisted of visiting twice a year all the ports and fortifications of Brittany, and of inspecting military and naval stores. The well-known house called the Maison Henri II at La Rochelle may have been designed by De l'Orme about this period or a little later. The Doric entablature with its bucrania in the metopes both in scale and detail resembles the entablature in the gallery of the Rue Juiverie at Lyons. The coronets and the H. and D. intertwined of Henri II appear on the

<sup>1</sup> There is a reproduction of Du Cerceau's drawing of St. Maur in the British Museum in "French châteaux and gardens in the sixteenth century," Ward, pl. xiii. This drawing shows the elevation to the courtyard as given by De l'Orme, but is evidently an extension of his original design for Du Bellay. At what date it was made is unknown, but it must have been before the remodelling for Cathérine de Médicis. The elevation given by De l'Orme (p. 251 verso) is not the front as stated by Mr. Ward, but the back—"La face du *devant* du Bastiment du susdit château de S. Maur," and the name as given by De l'Orme is "Saint Maur *des fossez*."

R. B. 1888



THE PORTE CHAPLLE: COMPIÈGNE. BY PH. DE L'ORME. (P. 80)



flat stone ceilings of the Loggia. De l'Orme's commission included such duties as that of seeing that the galleys at Havre and the ships off the coast of Normandy were in good order, and from his own account he discharged his duties with prodigious zeal. He discovered thefts and embezzlements at St. Malo, Nantes, and Concarneau. At Brest he found the stores, guns, and ammunition had been taken from the castle, and states that if it had not been for his energy and presence of mind in mounting sham guns on the ramparts, the Castle would have been taken by the English. It appears that De l'Orme saw actual service. He himself says that he had the charge "de fortifier à la guerre," and that on several occasions he was "capitaine en chef et fermé," *i.e.*, stood a siege.<sup>1</sup> He spent four months in Normandy, arranging for the provisioning and equipment of ships, and says he was 800 crowns out of pocket,<sup>2</sup> and that all he got for his pains was the promise of a benefice. De l'Orme, in his latter days, considered that he had been hardly used by François I. That King did not recognize his abilities as an architect, and throughout his reign was in the hands of the Italians. But with the King's death in 1547 all this was changed. Serlio's position became untenable,<sup>3</sup> and one of the first acts of Henri II was to appoint De l'Orme architect to the King, and Inspector of all the Royal Buildings. His commission was plenary, and he set about its discharge in that drastic and uncompromising spirit which made him ultimately one of the most unpopular men in France.

His duties as Inspector were to inquire how François I had been served in his buildings, and to compel defaulting tradesmen to make good all malversation and defects. De l'Orme laid a heavy hand on the master-builders, damning their work impartially, and compelling them to disgorge their ill-gotten gains, and he seems to have been the sort of man who would have broken up unfortunate tradesmen without the slightest compunction. The immense success of his career, from 1547 to the death of Henri II in 1559, seems to have filled him with a spirit of *ὕβρις*, as the Greeks would have called it, an exultant delight in the reckless exercise of his power. It was probably this trait in his character which earned him the dislike of craftsmen such as Bernard Palissy, and poets such as Ronsard. To the latter De l'Orme appeared less as the man of genius than as the successful upstart. Lescot was a gentleman and Ronsard's friend, Bullant, such a modest, good sort of

<sup>1</sup> See Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> "Instruction de M. d'Yvry," Berty, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> In 1550 Serlio retired from Fontainebleau to Lyons.

man that no one could quarrel with him; but De l'Orme, able and arrogant, profoundly convinced of his own attainments, was another matter, and Ronsard would have nothing to do with him except to hold him up to ridicule on every occasion. Ronsard called him "la truelle crossée," the humour of which is not very obvious. Rabelais, on the other hand, with whom De l'Orme was on friendly terms, called him "grand architecte du roi Mégiste."<sup>1</sup>

In spite, however, of his appointment as architect to the King, the work that he actually carried out for Henri II seems to have been inconsiderable. The King took little interest in building, and De l'Orme was only employed on unimportant additions and alterations to the royal palaces. At Fontainebleau, with the exception of the Horseshoe Staircase,<sup>2</sup> his work consisted chiefly of repairs. At La Muette he built one of his famous framed roofs,<sup>3</sup> constructed as a wooden barrel vault, with a covered walk along the top, of such strength, according to his own account, that it could have carried heavy guns. When, however, Du Cerceau saw it, a few years later, the roof had already fallen in. The Chapel that he built at Villers Cotterets is now destroyed; there is a drawing of it by Du Cerceau in the British Museum, and a very ugly thing it is. The plan consisted of three engaged circles, with a portico in the entrance side. It was here that he first used his invention of the French order, that is, a column with bands of ornament at intervals up the shaft. The object was to conceal the joints of the stones of which the column was formed, one of those wrong-headed inventions which a finer taste would have rejected. The beauty of a column is in its proportion and outline, both of these are destroyed by this most unhappy device, but it was characteristic of De l'Orme to believe that ingenuity, and what he sometimes calls "une grande rompement de teste" could take the place of artistic imagination.

At Vincennes he tells us he completed the vaulting of the Chapel,<sup>4</sup> and here for once in a way he must have worked in the "mode Française," for there is no trace of the new manner in the Chapel. He is also supposed to have rebuilt the vaulting of the Porte Chapelle at Compiègne, and the frontispiece above the archway which he designed here is quite one of the best examples of his manner that has reached

<sup>1</sup> See Berty, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards rebuilt by Lemer cier.

<sup>3</sup> De l'Orme, "Architecture," 290 v°, and "Instruction de M. d'Yvry," Berty, p. 55. A full account of this very ingenious construction is given in the first book of De l'Orme's "Nouvelles Inventions." See also Appendix 2, p. 218, "Studies in Architecture," Reginald Blomfield.

<sup>4</sup> "Instruction de Monsieur d'Yvry," Berty, p. 59.







us intact. The only important design that he made for Henri II was one for some new buildings at St. Germain-en-Laye, consisting of a theatre on the brow of the hill above the river, and a gallery connecting this building with the Château. The work was taken out of his hands on the accession of François II, but nothing further appears to have been done here till the reign of Henri IV, when large additions were made to De l'Orme's theatre by Guillaume Marchand, and an immense staircase was constructed leading down from the château to the gardens which lay at the foot of the hill next the river. Francini, the hydraulic engineer from Florence, carried out the elaborate waterworks. Du Cerceau gives a plan and elevation of the buildings as left by De l'Orme. The later work is shown in Francini's great bird's-eye view of St. Germain made in 1614, and in Perelle's engraving.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the reign of Henri II, however, his career was one of unbroken prosperity. In 1548 he was already councillor and almoner in ordinary to the King, Abbé of Geveton in Brittany, of St. Bartholomew and St. Eloi at Noyon, and of Yvry in the diocese of Evreux. The latter abbey he exchanged in 1550 with Jacques de Poitiers, brother of Diane, for the Abbey of St. Serges les Angers, which brought him in a revenue of 2,700 livres a year. The total revenues of these abbeys amounted to 3,300 livres a year. His enemies stated that he had been in receipt of 20,000 livres. De l'Orme indignantly repudiated the charge, and stated that so far from being overpaid, he had maintained ten or a dozen horses in the King's service, and kept open house, wherever he was, for captains, concierges, controllers, masons, carpenters and whoever it might be, without receiving a farthing in return, nay, more, that he had never been paid for the models he had had made for the King and his Court, sometimes at a cost of two or three hundred crowns apiece.<sup>2</sup> No doubt, under these circumstances, De l'Orme considered himself entitled to decline any assistance to his monks at Noyon, when they wished to rebuild their Abbey in 1560, and he omits to state that when presented with the Abbey of Ivry in 1549 he evicted the Prior in order to take possession. De l'Orme, though Abbé of Ivry and Noyon and a canon of Notre Dame at Paris, left an illegitimate son and daughter for whom he provided in his will, and his pious ejaculations a little recall the religious fervour of Cellini who was in the habit of thanking his maker for having enabled him to stab his enemy in a vital place.

<sup>1</sup> See also Sauvageot, "Palais, Châteaux," etc., ii, 82, 83.

<sup>2</sup> "Instruction de M. d'Yvry," Berty, p. 50.

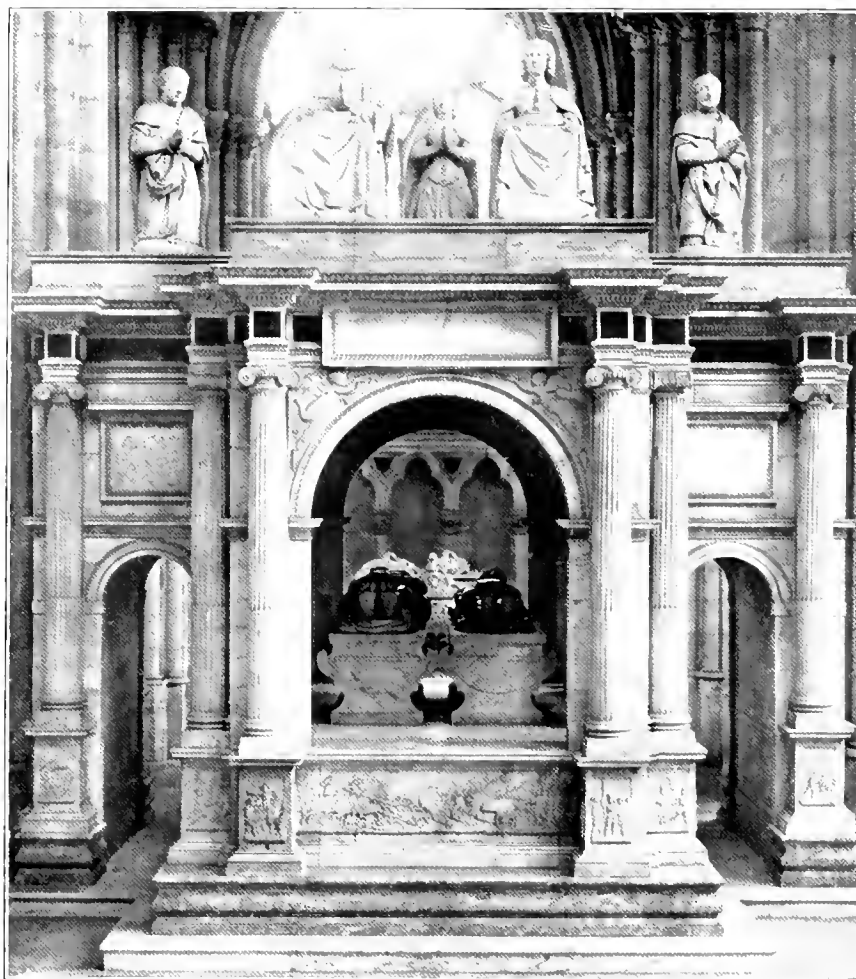
It is clear from these benefactions that De l'Orme must have gained the favour of Henri II before his accession. The fact that he was passed over by François I may have commended him to Henri II, and through him to Diane de Poitiers, who soon after the King's accession employed him to design the great house of Anet on the Dure.<sup>1</sup> Diane de Poitiers, widow of Louis de Brezé, was immensely rich, and had the King's resources as well as her own to draw on, and at Anet De l'Orme had a free hand and practically *carte blanche*. It is thus typical of his manner, and though more than half of it has disappeared, what is left is, with the building that he designed at Chenonceaux, the most important example remaining of De l'Orme's architecture. The new design had to incorporate portions of an older building which can be seen in Du Cerceau's view in the north-east corner of the quadrangle. This part De l'Orme ingeniously screened by keeping it at the back of one side of the quadrangle, and it is probable that he got some balance by placing his chapel also at the back with its turrets showing above the roofs of the court. The ground-plan formed a large courtyard, three sides occupied by buildings, the fourth kept low, and enclosed by screen walls which are returned to form the curious and very characteristic entrance. Above this entrance was Cellini's nymph of Fontainebleau, a hard unpleasant figure, out of scale with the architecture. At the back of the building were very large gardens, surrounded by a terrace and a moat, with a terrace above a cryptoporticus<sup>2</sup> on the side next the house, communicating with the gardens by one of De l'Orme's elaborate staircases in the form of a crescent, of which he complacently says that "those who have the least scintilla of taste will find in it some good points." To the right and left of the entrance were two small gardens with terraces overlooking the moat, and leading past detached buildings to pavilions at the extreme angles of the façade. To the east of the house, that is at the back of the chapel, was a large open court with a fountain in the centre. To the west was the court of the fountain of Diana, and beyond this the tennis court and stables, all of which have disappeared. The chapel is circular in plan, 28 ft. in diameter, with recesses about 14 by 7 ft., north, south, east, and west, the west door opening on to a loggia. Small chambers were provided in the north-east and south-east angles and

<sup>1</sup> Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," p. 32, says that Anet, which had been sequestered to the Crown, was presented to Diane de Poitiers by Henri II immediately after his accession, and that the King commissioned De l'Orme to prepare his designs in 1552.

<sup>2</sup> The remains of the cryptoporticus can still be seen, but all the garden has gone.



ANCI (p. 82)



[X. photo.]

TOMB OF FRANCIS I AND CLAUDE DE FRANCE AT ST. DENIS,  
BY PHILIBERT DE L'ORME (P. 83)

staircases in the north-west and south-west.<sup>1</sup> The chapel has a hemispherical dome, coffered diagonally with a lantern and cupola in the crown, the plan of the coffers being reproduced in various marbles on the pavement. In the spandrels of the arches there are some beautiful figures of children, carrying the emblems of the Passion, by Goujon; but here again, as in the figure over the entrance arch, De l'Orme and his sculptor were not in touch. The architect's passion for small and elaborate detail overpowered his feeling of scale, never very sensitive, and the effect suffers from his excess of ingenuity. Standing detached to the west of the house is the mortuary chapel of the Duchess, either by an architect who is quite unknown, or perhaps by Bullant. Had De l'Orme been able to eliminate his detail and keep his work on the level of that larger scale he might indeed have deserved his place among the great architects of history.

Yet there is much that is admirable in Anet, even in its mutilated state; and when one considers the detail habitual with the master-builders of François I, the advance in scholarship and in a certain elaborate refinement of technique shown in De l'Orme's work is astonishing. Moreover, the general conception of the plan, the main central court with its advanced entrance, flanked by subordinate courts and backed up by the great enclosed gardens, is fine and even masterly, and for the first time one can trace a real attempt at rhythmical composition in the long low lines of the entrance façade in relation to the lofty buildings of the central court behind it, in the recesses on either side that give value and importance to the principal entrance, and lastly, in the predominant symmetry of the whole composition. It is these qualities that constitute a difference in kind between Anet and Fontainebleau, or between Anet and Azay-le-Rideau. Between the two there is the deep gulf fixed that separates haphazard building from serious and deliberate design.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile De l'Orme was engaged on the important monument of François I in the church of St. Denis. The first mention of this in the *Comptes* occurs in 1552, in connection with a contract for sculpture with Pierre Bontemps, whom we first met as a humble stucco-man at Fontainebleau. The design, which has been extravagantly admired, is, if one may say so without disloyalty to one's own

<sup>1</sup> See Du Cerceau's plan. The chapel was restored by Caristie in 1844, and its exterior has suffered considerably.

<sup>2</sup> A more detailed account of Anet will be found in an essay on Philibert de l'Orme, "Studies in Architecture."

art, too architectural. There is too much reliance on mouldings, and details. The sculpture is severely repressed into panels; and where the architect ought to be strong, namely in a sense of scale, he fails rather badly by combining Ambrose Perret's fine figures in the spandrels of the arch with the minute detail of Pierre Bontemps' reliefs of the battles of the Italian campaigns in the pedestals and plinths. The figures of the King and Queen, life-size and naked, rest on sarcophagi under the central arch. De l'Orme was possibly not responsible for this hideous relic of mediaevalism, or for the crude arrangement of the five kneeling figures set about on the top; yet an artist of finer feeling would have instinctively recoiled from a treatment which made such barbarities possible.

Of Monceaux, a great house of about this period, nothing remains. It was here that De l'Orme introduced one of his famous roofs to cover in the tennis court at a tithe of the cost that the builders proposed, but it is not known whether he designed the house at "Monsseau," as he calls it, "ou j'avoys dressé de tant belles inventions," and where he says his work was crippled by the opposition of M. de Nevers and others. Monceaux was rebuilt in the reign of Henri IV, and, as shown in Sylvester's view, there is no trace of De l'Orme, except possibly in the four pavilions at the corners of the "Fausse-Braye" (the raised platform on which the house was built).

On 10th July 1559 Henri II died, thrust through the eye by Montgomery at a Court tournament. The change in De l'Orme's fortunes was immediate and disastrous. For the first time Catherine de Médicis began to show her hand. She moved at once to the Louvre with the Court and the young King. The old Constable de Montmorency, once all powerful, was left behind to watch the body of the dead King, and Diane de Poitiers was obliged by Catherine to exchange Chenonceaux for Chaumont, and retired to Anet to spend the few remaining years of her life in the pursuit of virtues which had received somewhat scanty attention in her long and brilliant life.<sup>1</sup> De l'Orme's day was over too. Even before the late King was buried, his architect was dismissed from his appointment, and "Francisque Primadicy de Bollogne en Italie" was installed in his place, the King having such confidence "in his sense, sufficiency, loyalty, probity, diligence, and great experience in the art of architecture," the King, by the way, being a sickly youth of sixteen who had been two days on the throne, and Primaticcio not having had, so far as is known, any

<sup>1</sup> She died at Limours in 1566.



special training in architecture at all.<sup>1</sup> He is appointed to all the functions previously discharged by "Maistre Philibert De l'Orme" and his brother Jean.<sup>2</sup> The words of his patent are identical with those of De l'Orme's of 1548, except for the last sentence expressing the King's confidence in the ability of Primaticcio. M. Dimier founds Primaticcio's architectural pretensions on this sentence, but, with the exception of a design for the tomb of the Guises at Joinville, there is no record of any architectural design by him, and it is probable that the words were inserted with the object of concealing the scandal of the appointment. De l'Orme made a characteristic protest; with an impetuosity that is scarcely coherent or articulate he wrote his "Instruction de Monsieur d'Yvry, dict de Lorme, Abbé De Saint Sierge,"<sup>3</sup> in which he recounts his services, and the harsh return he had received, doing this he says not for his own glory, but on account of the great calumnies and hatreds that pursued him, in order that all princes, seigneurs, and gentlemen of honour might know the truth of the facts; but it was all in vain. The princes and gentlemen of honour would not listen, and De l'Orme had to put up his T-square and occupy his enforced leisure with writing his "Nouvelles Inventions,"<sup>4</sup> and that vast treatise on architecture to which indeed he owes his most enduring reputation.

De l'Orme contemplated nothing less than an encyclopaedia of architecture, in which he was to state the result of his studies and his long experience in building. He did not live to complete his enterprise, but he did succeed in writing the first really practical treatise on architecture of modern times. His interminable pages may be, as he said of Vitruvius, "Forte indigeste et confuse," but what he wrote was largely the result of his own personal experience and observation. He

<sup>1</sup> The patent appointing Primaticcio is given in the *Comptes*, ii, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Jean de l'Orme, however, recovered his office three years later, as in 1562 he receives payment for work done at the Bridge of Gournay, and is described in the entry as "maistre-général des œuvres de maçonnerie par tout le royaume de France." *Comptes*, ii, 85. In 1563 he is simply styled "maistre maçon," ii, 108.

<sup>3</sup> This memoir was discovered in MS. by M. Delisle, in the Imperial Library at Paris in 1859, just three hundred years after it was written. It is printed in full in Berty's "Les Grands Architectes," pp. 49-59. The MS., which is addressed to "Monseigneur et meilleur amy," is not dated, but no doubt, as Berty suggested, was drafted after his dismissal. Berty suggests that "Monseigneur" was Eustace du Bellay, Bishop of Paris.

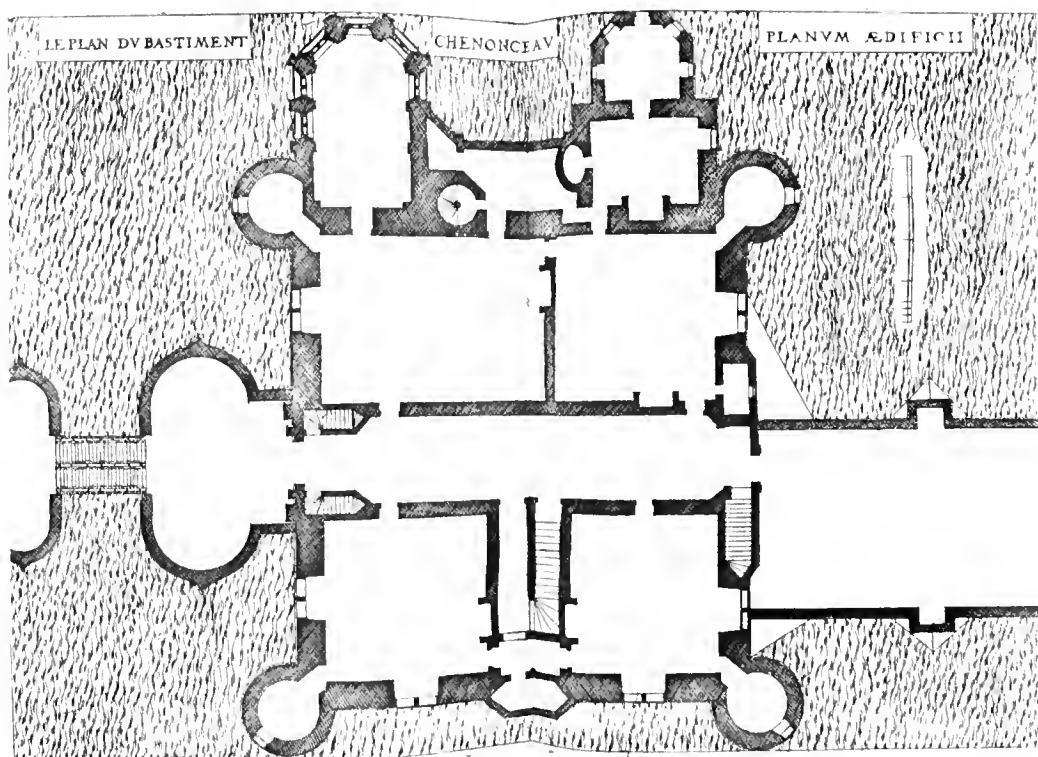
<sup>4</sup> The "Nouvelles Inventions" was first issued as a separate treatise in 1561. The "Premier Tome de l'Architecture de Philibert de l'Orme" appeared in 1567. A second edition was issued by Regnault Chaudières in 1626, in which the "Nouvelles Inventions" are included as Books X and XI.

avoided the vain repetition of the Italian treatises, and dealt in the most resolute manner with problems of construction, practical masonry, and the qualities of materials. He was the first writer to systematize stereotomy, the art of setting-out and cutting stones for given positions in masonry. But his work is something very much more than a merely technical treatise. Scattered up and down his pages are queer personal reflections, passages of autobiography, strains of thought which suggest an intense, if somewhat bizarre, personality. A sense of personal grievance underlies every page of his book, and a temper always under imperfect control blazes out in the concluding paragraphs in which he describes the good architect and the bad one, the man without hands and eyes, blind, stupid, wicked, and incompetent.

De l'Orme's peculiar hatred and contempt were concentrated on the painters "*qui les [the plans] sçavent plutôt bien farder, laver, ombrager et colorer, qui bien faire et ordonner avec toutes leurs mesures . . . et se promettent incontinent estre grands architectes . . . et sont si presomptueux qu'ils veulent entreprendre les œuvres de maçon.*" Whereas, according to De l'Orme, they knew just as much and as little about it as a lawyer's clerk. De l'Orme could never forgive Primaticcio for having supplanted him at the Court.

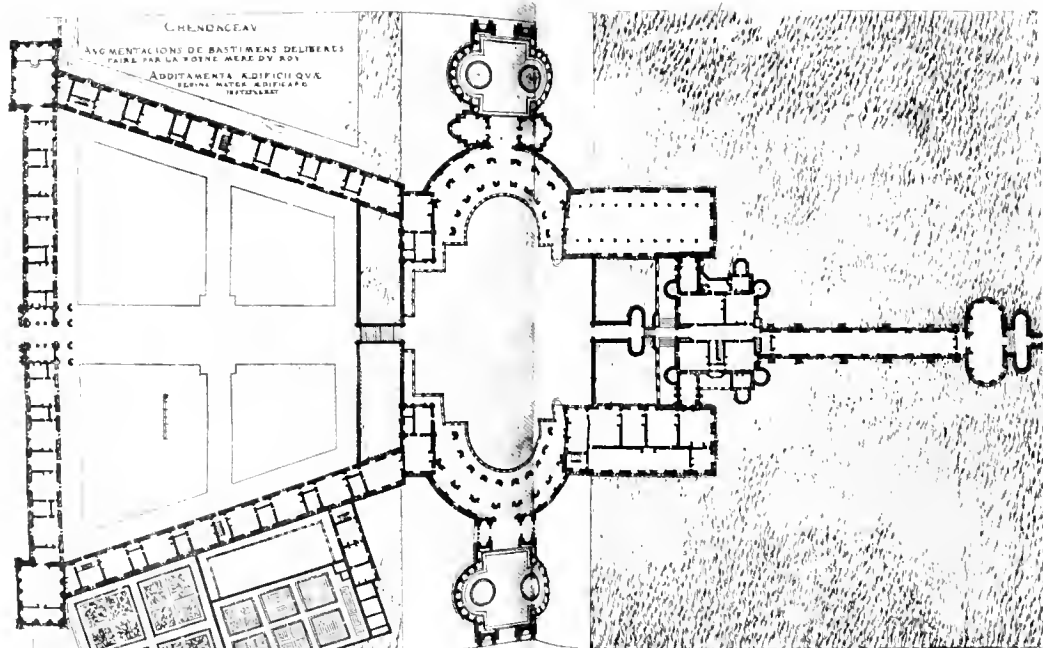
He was, however, allowed one more chance in his latter days. Catherine de Médicis, who had a constant habit of going back on her actions, employed him first at Chenonceaux, and then on the Tuileries. Chenonceaux, which had been handed over to the Crown by Anthoine Bohier in settlement of his father's debts, was presented to Diane de Poitiers by Henri II, but the Duchess, one of the greediest women that ever lived, was by no means satisfied with her position, and by a series of extraordinary manœuvres Bohier, then living in fear of his life at Venice, was compelled to reconstitute himself the owner of Chenonceaux, and to hold a fresh sale of the property in settlement of the claims of the Crown, although François I had given his word of honour that the original settlement of 1537 was a final settlement of all claims. At this sale the property was sold to Diane de Poitiers for 50,000 livres which she never paid, and Bohier was let off the 40,000 livres (balance of the 90,000 livres) for which he was held answerable, in consideration of his agreement to this amazing procedure. Meanwhile the Duchess had spent considerable sums on the gardens, and these were refunded to her by Henri II in 1552, "*en faveur des recommandables services, qu'elle a ci-devant faits à notre chère et très aimée compagne, la royne!*" Seven years later Catherine de Médicis,





[Du Cerceau del.]

GROUND PLAN: CHENONCEAUX (P. 70)  
BOHIER'S BUILDING



[Du Cerceau del.]

CHENONCEAUX: CATHERINE DE MÉDICIS' PLAN FOR ENLARGEMENT, BY DE L'ORME (P. 87)

had her revenge in expelling the Duchess from Chenonceaux.<sup>1</sup> It appears that in 1556 De l'Orme had prepared designs for a gallery across the Cher. A contract had been entered into by Diane de Poitiers, and the works actually begun, and apparently the bridge nearly completed under the charge of Jean de l'Orme, brother of the architect. Immediately after the death of Henri II Catherine compelled the Duchess to exchange Chenonceaux for Chaumont, and De l'Orme was employed to design a very extensive scheme of additions which included a forecourt, an isosceles trapezium in plan, and measuring on the façade 372 feet, an inner court measuring 240 by 156 feet, with semicircular ends, and finally double galleries above the bridge on the further side of the house, with an antechamber on the opposite bank. These are shown by Du Cerceau in plan, but not in his perspective. The galleries about 180 feet long by 18 feet wide were completed nearly up to the further bank, but the end bay next the bank was never finished, and the detail is, in places, left in block.<sup>2</sup> Chenonceaux is, of course, a building of two dates, and a suggestive illustration of the difference in manner between the work of the ornamentalists at their best and the work of the architect who succeeded them. The square block, forming the house proper, and built by Bohier, I have already noticed as remarkable for its plan and for the extreme delicacy of the details of the interior. It would seem as if De l'Orme ignored this work of set purpose, for the two galleries are resolutely plain and even severe in detail. There is no suggestion of ornament, except at the ends of the galleries and the upper parts of the chimneys, and the whole scale of the work is larger and finer in treatment than anything that remains of his work at Anet. Perhaps owing to its distance from Paris Catherine left De l'Orme more to himself, for his old faults reappear in the design of the Tuileries which followed it, but it is possible that his design was modified in execution, the details simplified, and the scale increased when the work was carried out by other hands. According to Chevalier<sup>3</sup> the galleries were not actually built till 1570-76, when they were carried

<sup>1</sup> See Chevalier, "Le château de Chenonceau," 35-43.

<sup>2</sup> "De tous les grands desseins que la Reyne Cathérine avait projetées pour en faire une maison délicate et très magnifique, elle n'acheva que la Galerie." Félibien, p. 48. See Chevalier, chapter v, for an account of her Italian gardens, and the fêtes of 1560 and of 1577, when Henri III and his mignons dressed like women, and the ladies of the Court, including the "flying squadron," waited on them dressed like men.

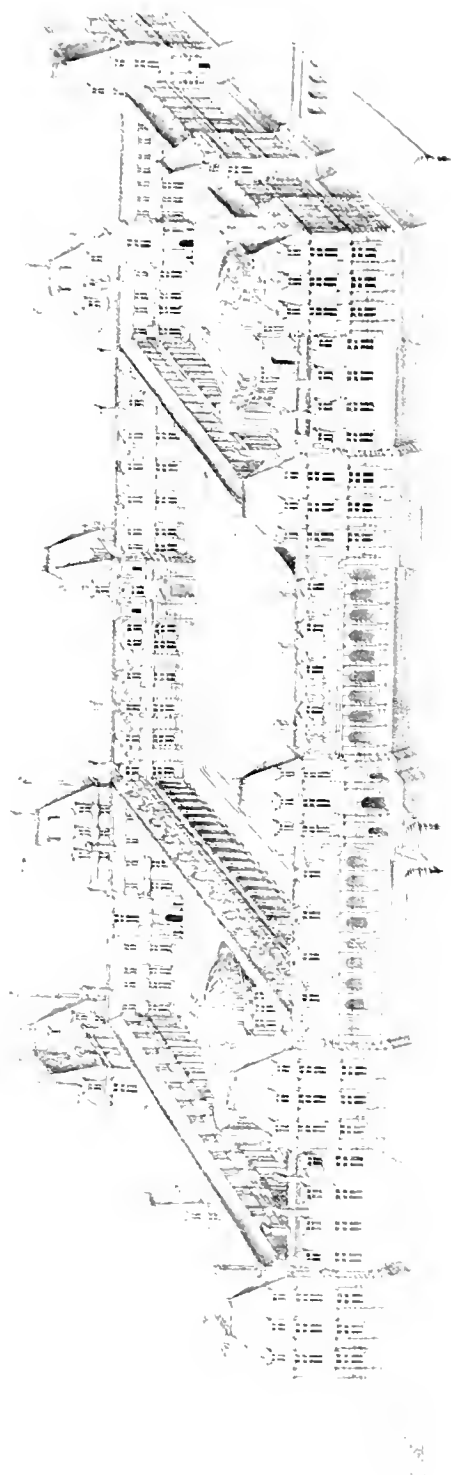
<sup>3</sup> "Le château de Chenonceau," p. 50.

out under Denis Courtin, contractor of the royal buildings at Blois, and master-mason to Catherine. The great oval chamber on the further bank, and the rest of the monumental scheme designed by De l'Orme (and shown by Du Cerceau) were abandoned. All that Catherine completed in addition to the galleries was the block of buildings to the right of the forecourt, built between 1580-5, it is supposed from designs left by De l'Orme. Catherine de Médicis never finished her buildings, partly from a superstition that she would die if she did, and partly from want of money. When she died in 1589, her debts amounted to 800,000 écus (estimated by Chevalier at £1,000,000 sterling), and Brantôme says she died not worth a sou, and her possessions were put up to public auction. She left Chenonceaux to Louise, "La Reine Blanche," widow of Henri III, but the creditors took all the rents. Moreover, with the restless inconsequence habitual to her, Catherine was already thinking of a vast pleasure-house on the outskirts of Paris. In 1564 she ordered the demolition of the Hôtel des Tournelles, and bought up various outlying properties to the west of the Louvre; a quay was established on the Seine on the site of the Pont Royal, for the landing of materials,<sup>1</sup> and De l'Orme was instructed to design the palace of the Tuileries.

The general plan of the palace of the Tuileries was to consist of an oblong, some 807 feet long<sup>2</sup> by 500 feet wide, the longitudinal axis being set at right angles to the river. The façades, at the south end to the river, and at the north end, were to consist of two large pavilions with a projecting bay in the centre. The principal façades, facing eastward (to the Louvre) and westward, towards the gardens, with open country beyond, were to have three projecting bays in addition to the pavilion at the ends, the centre bay rather oddly being the smallest. Inside, this rectangle was divided into three main divisions, a large rectangular court in the centre, with colonnades on the north and south sides, and to the north and south of this two oblong courts, divided in the centre by elliptical colonnades. The general façade of the building on the garden side was to consist of a ground floor with a loggia and arcade, above which was an elaborate attic with stone dormers over the alternate bays, and between the dormers panels with pediments. The effect of this series of pediments at different levels must have been

<sup>1</sup> Bert, "Histoire Topographique de la Ville de Paris," ii, 7.

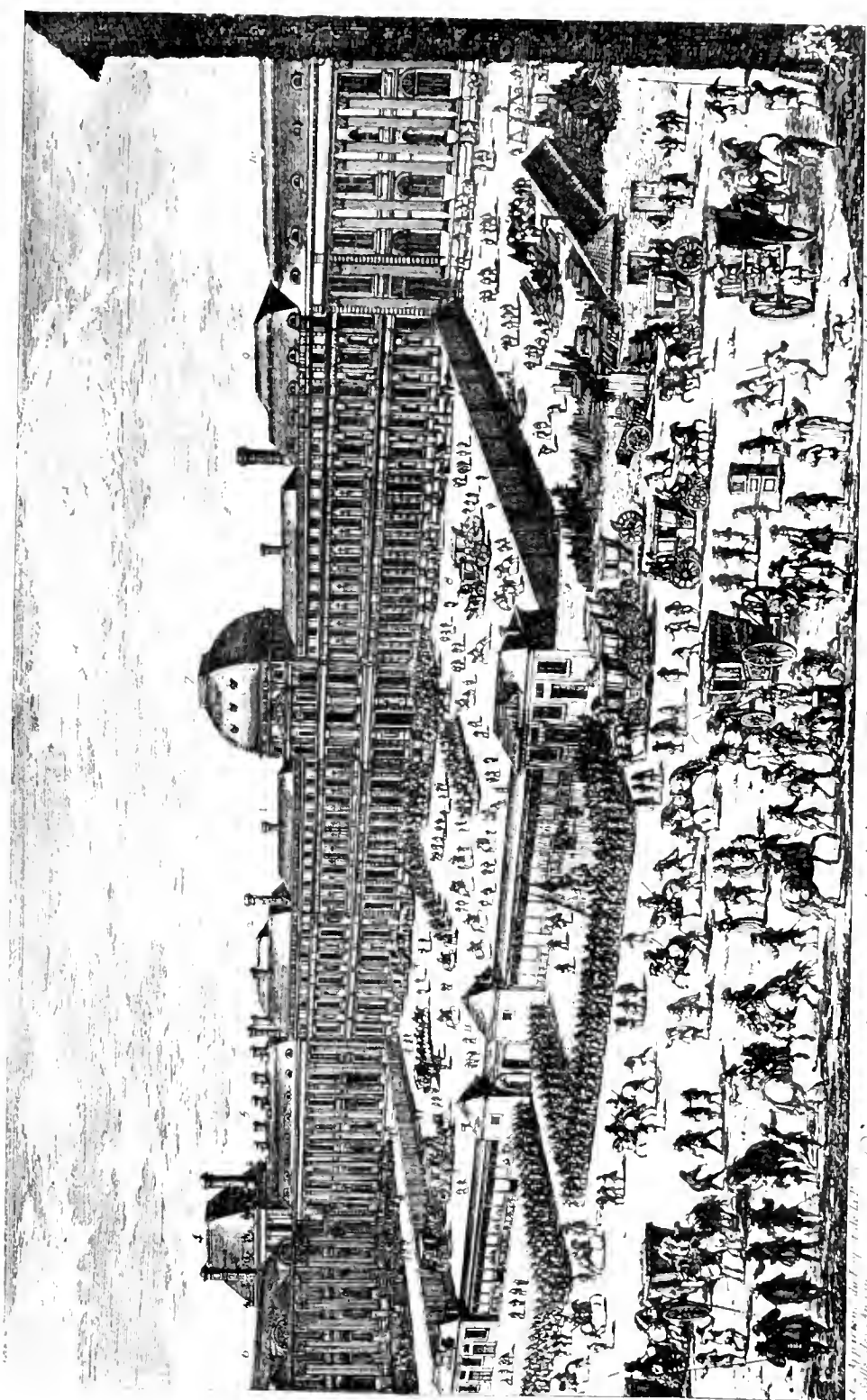
<sup>2</sup> Pig. de la Force, "Desc. de Paris," ii, 365, gives the total length as completed as 168 fathoms. The distance from end to end of the existing pavilions, as rebuilt, measures from north to south, 390 paces.



PERSPECTIVE VIEW AND PLAN OF THE CHURCH AS DESIGNATED BY TORRETTI (P. 88)







1. Le grand bâtiment principal  
2. Le bâtiment des machines  
3. Le bâtiment des ateliers  
4. Le bâtiment des bureaux  
5. Le bâtiment des magasins  
6. Le bâtiment des logements  
7. Le bâtiment des écuries  
8. Le bâtiment des remises  
9. Le bâtiment des voitures  
10. Le bâtiment des chevaux  
11. Le bâtiment des chiens  
12. Le bâtiment des chats  
13. Le bâtiment des oiseaux  
14. Le bâtiment des poissons  
15. Le bâtiment des insectes  
16. Le bâtiment des plantes  
17. Le bâtiment des animaux  
18. Le bâtiment des minéraux  
19. Le bâtiment des végétaux  
20. Le bâtiment des fossiles  
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THE FUTURE: ENVOI ENVOI THE FUTURE (P. 40)



restless in the last degree, and only partly saved by the long continuous roof behind.<sup>1</sup>

In the centre of the east façade was the great staircase. This was carried up for two storeys in a rectangular enclosure, above which was an elliptical dome surmounted by a lantern and cupola, with engaged tourelles at the four angles. The staircase was oval in plan, with an open well in the centre, and a bronze balustrade. Sauval, writing in the middle of the following century, said it was the boldest and most admirable staircase of its kind in the world, and such as a hundred years before would have been attributed to some sorcerer or fairy: "Cet escalier, en un mot, est si bien entendu, et si proprement conduit sans faire jarret, et tourne insensiblement tout d'une venue par une ligne qui suit la forme de ce trait, non moins rampante qu'adoucie, que jusqu'à présent il ne s'est encore rien vu de ce genre-là de plus hardi ni de plus admirable."<sup>2</sup> Sauval gives the dimensions as 30 feet by 27 feet by 60 feet high. The stairs were 8 feet wide, and ran in a continuous flight from top to bottom. He adds that after De l'Orme's death no one was found capable of completing it till the time of Henri IV, when a master mason named Boulet tried, very unsuccessfully, to complete this miracle of masonry. Yet such was the animosity that De l'Orme had aroused that at the time of his death people were not wanting who said that he had stolen the idea from a mason of Beauvais; one of those outrageous libels that are too frequent in the history of the arts.

The ill fortune of De l'Orme's later days clung to him to the last. The work at the Tuileries proceeded fitfully. Catherine, in spite of large gifts from the King and loans from French and Florentine bankers, could not find the money for her schemes, and all that De l'Orme lived to complete was the centre part of the building up to the intermediate bays to the north and south. Although he felt bound to say civil things about the Queen-Mother's taste in architecture, it is pretty clear that her interference checked and hampered him at every point. De l'Orme says "J'y procède tout aussi qu'il plaît à sa dicte Majesté me le commander, sauf les ornements, symmetries et mesures, pour lesquelles elle me fait cette grâce et faveur de s'en fier à moy." She in-

<sup>1</sup> Sauval, ii, 53, says these pediments had "excellentes figures de pierre dure," by Maître Ponce.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 54. The staircase was destroyed by Colbert's orders in 1664, in order to clear a vista through from the courtyard on the east side to the gardens on the west, and replaced by Leveau and Dorbay's huge pavilion. Pig. de la Force, "Desc. de Paris," ii, 365.

sisted on his introducing the most detestable devices of the inferior artists of the Italian Renaissance, such as "incrustations de diverses sortes de marbre, de bronze doré et pierres minerales comme marchasites, sur les pierres de ce pays." De l'Orme's influence on French architecture was not wholly for good, but it owed the worst of its features to Catherine de Médicis. Nor was she even loyal to her own servant. When Ronsard insulted De l'Orme in the Tuileries she severely snubbed the unpopular architect, and informed him with fatuous irrelevance that the Tuileries was dedicated to the Muses. On 25th May 1871 the palace was burnt to the ground by the Commune, and though the walls were left standing, it was afterwards found necessary to take down the whole of the building.

It is difficult now to appraise the precise quality of the Tuileries as an architectural design. Judged by later standards it might seem to fail in dignity of treatment, to rely too much on intricate and even banal detail, to the neglect of the more important matters of mass and outline. Nor is it possible to realize with any accuracy how far the scale was satisfactory. Sauval talks of its "grandeur demesurée," and "magnificence admirable." The Sieur de Chambray, on the other hand, criticized the "French order" as even "less pleasing than the Gothic." Certain photographs taken after the fire give an impression of size and boldness not borne out by the engraved designs. On the other hand the great staircase was certainly a masterpiece, and the plan of the three courts was fine, and architecturally in advance of Lescot's conception of the Louvre. The proper standard by which to estimate the Tuileries is not that of Versailles or Greenwich, but that of St. Germain and Fontainebleau, and so considered De l'Orme's design for the Tuileries ranks as a memorable achievement in ordered and organic thought.

De l'Orme died on a Sunday evening, 8th January 1570, in his Canon's house of Notre Dame.<sup>1</sup> He had played a considerable part, written an immense book, and designed some of the most notable buildings in France of the middle part of the sixteenth century. What place does he occupy among the famous architects of the world? His own opinion of himself was that he had simply re-established architecture in France. "Have I not also," he says, "done a great service in having brought into France the fashion of good building, done away with barbarous manners, and great gaping joints in masonry, shown to

<sup>1</sup> In an account (*Comptes*, ii, 157) for 1568, De l'Orme is described as "defunct." Berty, "*Les Grands Architectes*," 44, contends that this entry was made after 1568, the date of De l'Orme's death, 8th January 1570, being expressly mentioned in the Capitular registers of Notre Dame.



*Ensemble*

*Mon. II*

THE TUILERIES, THE "FRENCH ORDER" (P. 90)



all how one should observe the measures of architecture, and made the best workmen of the day, as they admit themselves. Let people recollect how they built when I began Ste. Maur for my lord the Cardinal du Bellay. Moreover, let it be recollected that all I have ever done has been found to be very good and to give great contentment to all." In his architecture he calls attention to the value of his inventions in construction, to his scientific treatment of masonry, to his minute and elaborate study of the details of classical architecture, even to the discovery of his French order. De l'Orme's literary methods tempt one to discount unduly his real attainments; but it should be recollected that when he wrote he was in disgrace and attacked on all sides, and that he wrote under a bitter sense of the ingratitude of those whom he had served, and of the jealousy, as it appeared to him, of his rivals. Many of the claims that he put forward with such aggressive vehemence were, in fact, well founded. He did actually revolutionize building methods in France,<sup>1</sup> and it is here that he stands apart from, and indeed ahead of, his contemporaries, for Lescot, the elegant Court gentleman, left these vulgar matters to his builders, and Bullant, fine artist as he was, approached architecture too exclusively from its artistic side. De l'Orme was a curious mixture. He had the zeal for learning of the Humanists, and, strangely enough for a man of his religious convictions, the faculty for independent thought and for getting at the heart of things which was more generally associated with those of the reformed religion. In this latter point he to a certain degree resembled Palissy and the group of artists who drew a sanction for the rancour of their professional rivalry from the tenets of their religion. As an original constructor, De l'Orme was in the very front rank of his time; as an architect he occupies a different position. He was too much entangled in details, starting with no clear conception of architecture as an art, and apt to think that its complete aesthetic purpose was satisfied by the minutiae of highly-elaborated design. His art was never spontaneous, never the result of a full and living imagination. It smelt of the lamp, even of the shovel of the grave digger. Yet architecture itself is such a complex art that a powerful brain and a resolute will may go far, even with moderate artistic endowments. That he thoroughly knew his business there can be no doubt, and a plan such as that of the Tuileries is a remarkable instance of this ability. The Tuileries was the first of the great

<sup>1</sup> That excellent critic, Jacques François Blondel, fully recognized the value of De l'Orme's work in this regard. In vol. iv, p. 25, he notes that Claude Perrault, a man of liberal intelligence, urged the adoption of De l'Orme's scientific carpentry, and the use of copper instead of lead, as already employed by De l'Orme at Anet.

modern palaces of Europe,<sup>1</sup> and when, some fifty years later, Inigo Jones was called upon to design the palace of Whitehall, he did not hesitate to follow De l'Orme's plan in its general lines. The elevations are another matter. Inigo Jones, an architect of fine genius, went right away from his model; and it was at this point, in the realization of a fine idea, that De l'Orme failed, through want of imagination, through his inability to see the wood for the trees. De l'Orme was hardly a great artist, but he played an important part in the development of French architecture, and a perennial interest attaches to his strong and unusual personality.

After all, it is not intellect or imagination only that always wins the day. Force of character will fight its way to the front, and will not be easily dislodged when it has got there. It was by his strong individuality rather than by his art that De l'Orme won, and has maintained, his place among the great Frenchmen of the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Escorial, also by a Frenchman, was begun at almost exactly the same time, but it was designed for a totally different purpose, and stands in no sort of relation either to the Tuileries, the Louvre, or Versailles.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the buildings mentioned in the text, the following buildings have been attributed to De l'Orme:

The Chapel of the Valois.

The west entrance of the church of S. Nizier at Lyon, 1542. (This is certainly not by De l'Orme, but a clumsy addition of the seventeenth century. On the other hand, at S. Nizier at Troyes there is a west entrance porch of about this date (1542), entirely in De l'Orme's manner; and on the north side of this church is a doorway of the same date, in the spandrels of which are the three crescents of Diane de Poitiers, and on the frieze the H. and D. interlaced of Henri II. I think it probable that De l'Orme actually did this work, and S. Nizier of Troyes has been confused with S. Nizier of Lyon.)

A chapel of S. Eloy in the rue des Orfèvres, Paris.

Limours, near Rambouillet, a hall with a wooden roof for Diane de Poitiers.

Buildings at St. Leger in the Forest of Montfort d'Amaury ("Instruction de M. d'Yvry").

A building for an arsenal and magazine at Paris ("Instruction de M. d'Yvry").

Portions of Valençay and of the Château d'Uzès, also of Folembray and Coussi Vallery. (This is given in the first volume of Du Cerceau as having been built on the site of an old castle for the Maréchal de St. André. Du Cerceau says that the two wings and pavilions so built were "de très belle ordonnance et suivant l'art antique," and all in brick and dressed stone very well executed. The base is battered, as usual with De l'Orme, and the openings have great rustications and quoins. This design is actually one of the best of all those illustrated by Du Cerceau, and on its internal evidence I incline to attribute it to De l'Orme. Vallery, according to Du Cerceau, was five leagues south of Fontainebleau.)

Angerville, Bailleul, near Fécamp. (This house, which is built entirely of stone, has not, so far as I am aware, been attributed to De l'Orme, but both in detail and general treatment, it rather closely resembles his manner. The house, though full of good things, has been restored inside out of all knowledge, and the exterior has suffered severely from the ravages of the landscape gardener, who has destroyed every vestige of its original setting.)



## CHAPTER VI

### JEAN BULLANT

**J**EAN Bullant has been described by that accomplished historian, M. Lemonnier, as "un De l'Orme un peu ammoindri." I cannot imagine any criticism much wider of the mark. In their life, their temperament, and their work, Philibert De l'Orme and Jean Bullant were wholly unlike each other, and the phrase does very much less than justice to a man who was perhaps the most daring thinker in architecture that France produced in the sixteenth century.

Bullant is believed to have been born at Ecouen somewhere about 1515. It appears from a discovery made in the registers of Amiens, about fifty years ago, that a certain Jehan Bullant at Amiens was mason of the Cathedral in 1532, and between 1565 and 1568 was employed to design a bastion and "to strengthen the fortifications of the town." In 1574, when he is described as "architecte" of the town of Amiens, he was threatened by the town with a law-suit for having neglected his duties in the construction of the belfry, and for wasting the time of the workmen eight days running by giving them readings on the works for hours at a time. The episode, as Berty puts it, suggests the character of the man who wrote the "*Règle d'Architecture*": the modesty and kindness revealed in his preface, the temperament of an artist who would deal frankly and freely with his men. It is, however, difficult to see how Bullant, who in 1574 was busily occupied on the work of the Queen-Mother in Paris, could have been reading to his workmen in the belfry at Amiens, or how, having regard to his reputation, he could be described as architect of the town of Amiens, and the probability is that the Amiens man was a relation of the famous architect, not the architect himself.<sup>1</sup>

Practically nothing is known of his early training, except that somehow or other he got to Italy, as in his treatise on architecture he refers to "five manners of columns" "which I have measured from

<sup>1</sup> Berty, "*Les Grands Architectes*," 160-163.

the antique in Rome." It has been suggested that he was sent out there by the Constable, Anne de Montmorency, Lord of Ecouen, where Bullant lived, and Bullant himself says that the Constable had always employed him in work at his castle at Ecouen, in order that he might not waste his time in idleness, adding with characteristic candour that most of the time he had nothing else to do.<sup>1</sup> Unless he belonged to one of the guilds who jealously excluded all outsiders, the only chance of the artist or the craftsman lay with the noble Patron. De l'Orme had been given his start by a Cardinal. Bullant was to find his patron in a soldier, in some ways one of the most characteristic figures of the sixteenth century in France. Anne de Montmorency has been described as hard, unscrupulous, avaricious, so violent of temper that none dared to contradict him, a bigoted Roman Catholic, untempered by the slightest strain of humanism. But he had at least the virtues of his vices. He was a man of obstinate courage who died fighting at St. Denis in his seventy-fourth year. If he was harsh, he was also firm of purpose, and though he was arrogant beyond belief he had the merit of insisting on surroundings worthy of his position, and possessed an astonishing flair for a good artist. Montmorency was probably the richest man in France of his time. In 1526 he was made governor of Languedoc, and in the same year François presented him with the town and château of Compiègne. In 1528 the King gave him 50,000 livres on his marriage. In 1531 he inherited from his father the domains of Montmorency, Beaumont-sur-Oise, Chantilly, Ecouen, l'Isle Adam, and Fére en Tardenois, together with the title of Premier Baron de France. The Venetian ambassador said of him: "Il fait seul tout comme il lui plaît."<sup>2</sup> Bullant, Jean Goujon, Palissy, Abaquesne the potter of Rouen, the Lepots, glass-workers of Beauvais, all found employment in the great house at Ecouen. Montmorency, so intensely conservative in his politics and religion, was content with nothing less than the best and the newest thing in art that his wealth and great position could obtain for him.

Ecouen was perhaps the real school in which Bullant learnt his art. His association with men such as Goujon and Palissy, and his constant observation of their work, must have enlarged his horizon and given him a practical insight into other arts than his own. Whereas De l'Orme worked in jealous isolation, inveighing against the painters of pretty pictures, scarcely recognizing the sculptors, and abusing the

<sup>1</sup> Dedication of "*Règle Général d'Architecture*" to the Constable's son, 1567.

<sup>2</sup> Lemonnier, "*Hist. de France*," i, 202, and v, 2, 69.



ORGAN GALLERY, LOUVRE (P. 96)



COLOSSAL GALLERY, LOUVRE (P. 96)



builder with whole-hearted contempt, Bullant must have lived among artists and loved them; and though we have no such first-rate evidence of personality as is given by De l'Orme's writings, there are indications here and there that Bullant was a man of an ingenuous and sympathetic temperament who absorbed to the full the best influence of other artists. Ecoen, indeed, as a centre of artistic thought and training, must have been second only to Fontainebleau.

Goujon made the famous altar for the chapel now at Chantilly. In the chapel, too, were those splendid windows, now lost, which Lenoir says were painted by Palissy from drawings by Primaticcio. Lenoir describes them as showing "grande finesse, un tête charmante, draperies d'un gout exquis."<sup>1</sup> In the Church of St. Accéol at Ecoen there still exists some of the finest glass in France of this date (middle sixteenth century), probably presented by the Constable. These, however, show no trace whatever of Primaticcio and are probably by Lepot, and Lenoir's account seems rather doubtful. Fortunately the famous grisailles<sup>2</sup> from one of the galleries of Ecoen, giving the story of Cupid and Psyche, were saved by Lenoir and are now at Chantilly.<sup>3</sup> In the chapel at Ecoen there was a copy of Leonardo's "Last Supper" by Marco d'Oggione, a "Christ at the Tomb" by Il Rosso, and figures in marquetry after Raphael. Everything at Ecoen was to be of the best, the very locks were exquisite bits of iron-work, and the doors were of walnut, with elaborate arabesques painted in thick gilt.<sup>4</sup> All that now remains in the chapel are a few tiles and the fine wooden gallery over the entrance, an addition by either Goujon or Bullant to the chapel built by their predecessor.

The dates of the work at Ecoen are uncertain. As already mentioned, the main block of the building, including the chapel, was begun by Charles Billard, and probably completed before 1540-2. The date on the glass and certain of the paving tiles is 1542. Bullant's work is certainly subsequent to that date. It has been generally supposed that Montmorency spent the years of his disgrace, from 1541 till the death of François I in 1547, in adding to his house at Ecoen.<sup>5</sup> Part

<sup>1</sup> See F. de Lasteyrie, "Un grand seigneur du XVI siècle," "Gaz. des Beaux Arts," 1879.

<sup>2</sup> There are forty-four of these at Chantilly, date 1542-4.

<sup>3</sup> After the suppression of Lenoir's museum in the Rue des Petits Augustins, these were handed back to the old Prince de Condé, who never took the trouble to unpack the cases, and left them as they were to the Duc d'Aumale.

<sup>4</sup> Wrongly described by Palustre and others as "damascened."

<sup>5</sup> Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," 152. Berty, however, wrongly treated the house as

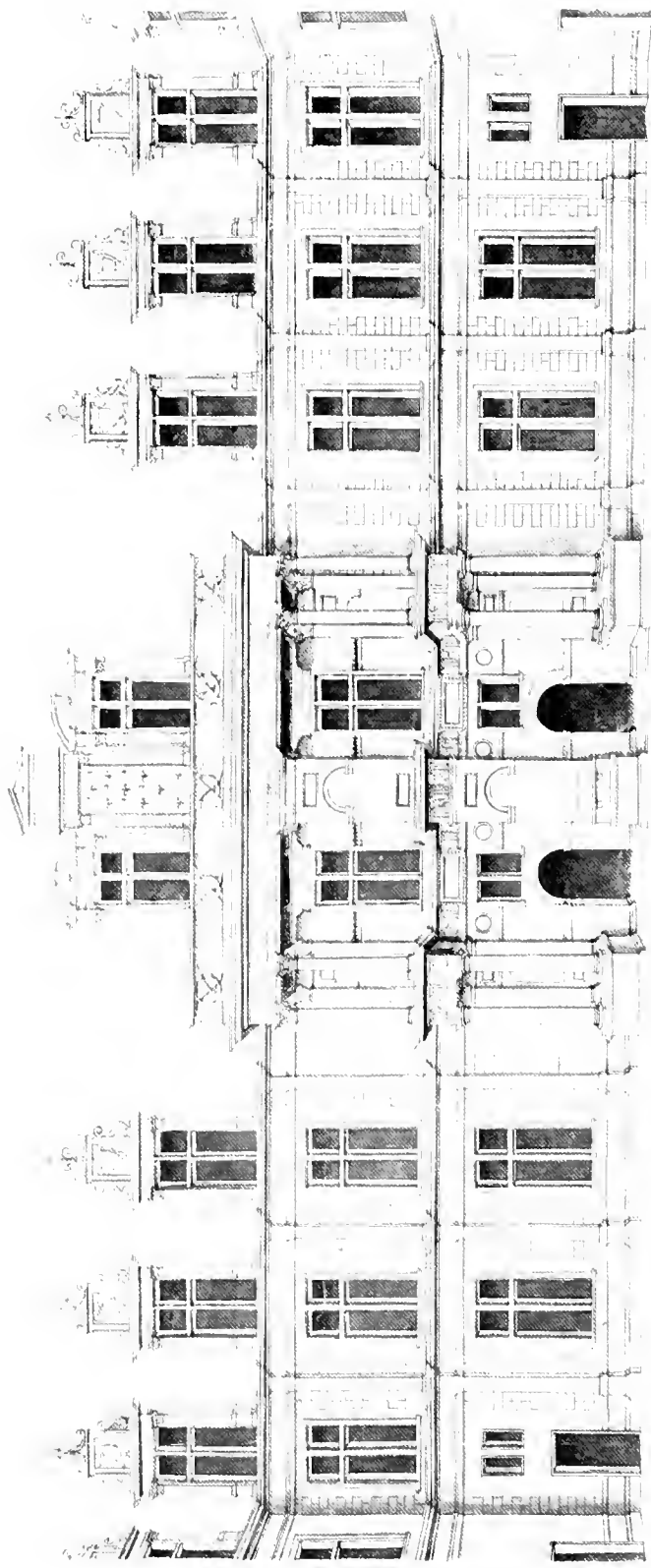
of Bullant's work is, however, certainly later, as the double D and three crescents of Diane de Poitiers appear on the south side, and there are suggestive differences in Bullant's own work which show that the additions which he made were not all of one date, or even consecutive, and make it probable that his journey to Italy was made between the intervals of his employment. A further complication is introduced by the possibility that some of the architectural details at Ecouen were added by Goujon, who was certainly for a time the Constable's architect, and it has been suggested that Goujon designed the gallery in the chapel and the entrance front now destroyed. The organ gallery is carried by five stone consoles, above which runs a continuous Doric entablature, at the level of the floor of the gallery. The front is formed by pairs of Doric columns with niches between them over the consoles. The bays between have a panelled front, and above this are columns and an entablature of the Ionic order. Faith, Charity, Hope, Prudence, and Justice are carved on cartouches. On one of the corbels is a head, with beard and moustache, said to be a portrait of Goujon or Bullant. In addition to these works there are the three frontispieces, one on the terrace overlooking the town, the second on the side to the court at the back of this, the third on the opposite side of the court; all of these are undoubtedly by Bullant, but there is a notable difference between the first two and the last. In the frontispiece on the south side of the court at Ecouen, and in the frontispiece on the terrace façade, we find the treatment of orders above orders; but in the frontispiece on the opposite side of the court, for the first time we come across the colossal order, with capitals copied from those of the three columns of the temple of Jupiter Stator at Rome,<sup>1</sup> which Bullant says he measured himself. Now Bullant was certainly the first to use this colossal<sup>2</sup> order in France, and though he did not always adhere to it, it remained a favourite feature in his design, and the inference is that the change in

all of one date. Palustre pointed out from the evidence of the building itself that it is of two dates, the earlier work by Billard, and Bullant's later additions, the date of which Palustre put at 1550. As I show, however, Bullant's own work was probably done at two different dates.

<sup>1</sup> This capital is drawn to a large scale in Serlio's Book IV, lxiii, figure B, ed. Venice, 1551. It is admirably illustrated in three plates, 129, 131, and 133, of "*Les Edifices Antiques de Rome*," A. Desgodetz, 1682. It is also given by De l'Orme, 194 verso, as the capital of one of three columns near the Church of SS. Cosmo and Damian, in Rome. As a matter of fact, the Ecouen capitals do not tally with the drawings. The volutes under the rosette only meet at Ecouen, in the drawings they are shown intertwined. M. Angelo's captives stood in the niches of this frontispiece.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, an order running through two or more storeys.





PROJET DE FAÇADE DE L'ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE, PAR M. L. BOUTIER.

[Du Génie civil.]

ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE: FAÇADE (P. 97)



manner at Ecouen was due to his having travelled in Italy before building this frontispiece, and after building, at any rate, the frontispieces of the terrace wing.

Bullant's work at Ecouen is unequal and uncertain. He had a very arbitrary master, and this may perhaps account for the manner in which he pitchforked his neo-classic into the middle of a François I design. The terrace façade shows signs of most violent changes. In the centre is the frontispiece in three storeys, consisting of large semicircular headed windows on the first and second floors, flanked by pairs of pilasters on either side, with a Doric entablature above the lower order, and an Ionic above the upper order. The entablatures are returned to allow for the window heads, and the cornices are continued to form a large pediment. On either side of these are bays in three storeys, terminating in segmental pediments which have no relation to the design of the centre, and beyond this again the façade continues in two storeys with pilasters and entablatures which have no relation either to the centre part or to the side bays, the cornice being simply chopped off to allow the bay to pass it. It almost looks as if the Constable was making experiments on Bullant's façade, and allowed his experiments to stand, for no architect left to his own devices would have tolerated the jumble of the terrace front.

The most satisfactory work here is the frontispiece on the inside of the court, through which passes the corridor to the terrace front. This is in two storeys, with a curious triple dormer, a smaller edition of the terrace design. Some regard has been paid here to the earlier work, as Bullant has kept his stringcourses lineable with the earlier strings, but his constant search for fresh motives in design is shown in the treatment of the whole composition. It is divided into two bays. Above the ground floor is a Doric entablature which returns round the piers and coupled columns, but the upper entablature is continuous, and supported at the ends by pairs of columns with niches between and a broad projecting pier with larger niches in the centre. The motive of the pairs of columns and niches he probably took from Serlio,<sup>1</sup> and it had already been followed at Ancy-le-Franc. But what is original here is the broad handling of the main features of the design, the treatment of the piers, the deep shadows of the continuous entablature, and the play of light and shade given by the recesses between the end columns and the central pier. The actual masonry itself is notable. The space between the columns and central pier was much too wide for

<sup>1</sup> Serlio, iv, xxvi.

a lintel, and Bullant, I believe for the first time in France, treated his lintel as a straight arch, running his voussoirs through both architrave and frieze.<sup>1</sup> There are, of course, points of detail in which the design is open to criticism, the division of the façade into two bays instead of three is unhappy, but what is remarkable in all Bullant's work is the freedom with which he let his mind play on his design as a whole, and the effort made to think not in detail but in planes and masses. In the reign of François I little attempt had been made to obtain big effects of light and shade. The nearest approach was the open gallery or colonnade, which had, of course, been done a hundred times before. Heavy cornices, flat pilasters, and surface ornament were used in abundance, but I can recall no instance in the earlier Renaissance showing consciousness of the possibilities of boldly contrasted surfaces in light and shade, and of the effects to be obtained by well-considered relations of mass. Bullant's predecessors thought in details, so did Lescot, even De l'Orme was stifled by his own erudition, but Bullant was an artist ahead of his time. He was the first of the neo-classical men in France to handle architecture as an art, complete in itself, having its own technical conditions and its own peculiar ideals. He was fortunate, too, in having as his employer, a man of a certain magnificence of temperament, as well as of prodigious wealth.

The Constable possessed at Fère en Tardenois a fine mediaeval castle, dating from the early part of the thirteenth century. In 1539 he had a good deal of work carried out here, possibly by Charles Billard, and appears to have more or less completed the house. Remains of early Renaissance detail still exist in the corbels of the groining of the upper Chapel, under the north-east window, where there is a small niche with a shell in the head and delicate early detail, and in the entrance near the viaduct where the egg and tongue occurs. There is also some early Renaissance ornament on the columns, much defaced. This work was done probably ten to twenty years before Bullant was called in to design the bridge and galleries. Having finished his house, the Constable cast his eyes on a very convenient plateau, separated from the house by a deep gorge, and admirably adapted for the handling of troops. Anybody else would have been daunted by the difficulties of the site, but the Constable stood at nothing, and between 1550 and 1560 he employed Bullant to throw an immense viaduct across the gorge from the Castle to the Place d'Armes. The whole scale of this

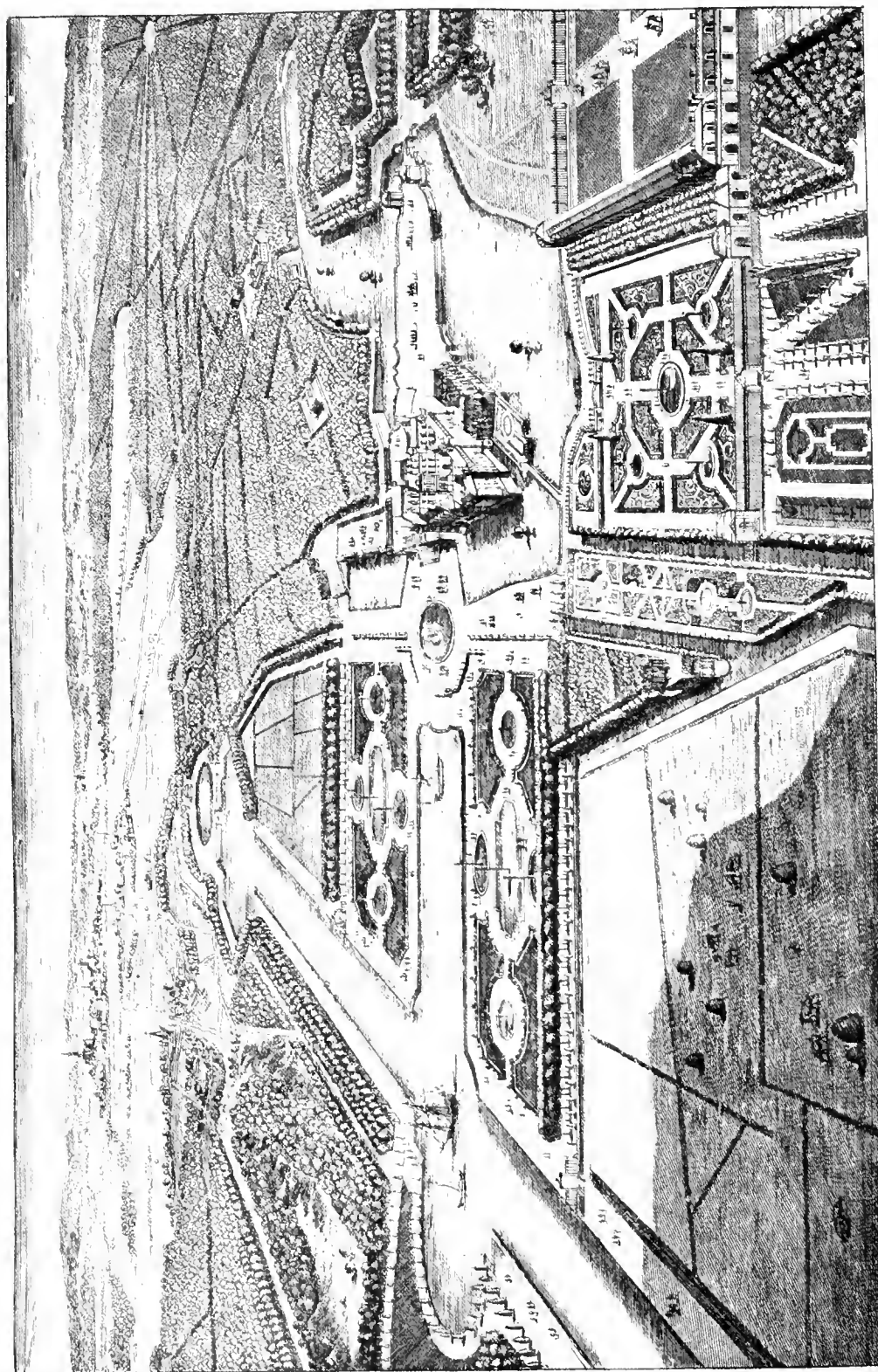
<sup>1</sup> Bullant used this device both here and in the colossal order opposite. In both cases the arches show signs of failure.



ENTRANCE TO THE GALLERY. TERRE EN TARDENOIS (P. 68)







VEUE GENERALE DE CHANTILLY du côté des Jardins

A Paris chez l'Historien rue St. Jacques a la Victoire Avec Privilege du Roi.

[P. 101]

CHANTILLY (P. 101)

bridge is heroic, simple and very strong. It has more of the quality of Roman work than any other building of the time. Five semicircular arches span the space on massive piers, 22 ft. thick. Above this ran a gallery in two storeys, 9 ft. 6 in. wide, some 200 ft. long, and over 100 ft. above the bottom of the gorge. The entrance from the Place d'Armes is through a square-headed doorway, above which is a window with remains of admirable trophies by Goujon in low relief. On either side are Doric columns, with an entablature of unusual proportions, returned in the centre for a segmental arch under the pediment which covers in the whole façade. The building is now ruinous, having been broken up by Philippe Egalité in 1779 in order to pay his creditors, and with an idea of winning popularity by destroying this splendid monument both of a great nobleman and of a man of the people. Even in its ruined state the gallery of Fère en Tardenois is one of the most impressive fragments of neo-classic in France. It is what Inigo Jones called "masculine and unaffected" architecture, the fit expression of two remarkable personalities.

It is pretty clear from Bullant's own account that so far he had received no employment from any one but de Montmorency. His first official promotion came in 1557, no doubt through the influence of the Constable. In that year a royal patent was issued<sup>1</sup> appointing Bullant to succeed Pierre Deshotels, lately deceased, in the post of controller of building operations at a salary of 1,200 livres a year. It appears from this patent that Bullant had already been acting controller in Deshotels's absence. He was now appointed to the office "comme personnage grandement expérimenté en fait d'architecture," his duties being to control the workmen, measure their work, and see if they had complied with the terms of their contracts. Bullant, however, was still a comparatively obscure person, he is simply styled "Maistre Jehan Bulant" in the patent, whereas a year before Philibert de l'Orme is described as "noble et discrète personne . . . Abbé d'Ivry, conseiller, aumonier ordinaire et architecte au Roi, commissaire ordonné et député sur le fait de ses batiments et édifices." De l'Orme was at this time all-powerful in the arts, backed by Diane de Poitiers, and therefore by the King; yet even so, he grudged Bullant his one ewe-lamb, for he managed to secure half his salary for his brother Jean, and when the *débâcle* came with the sudden death of the King, Bullant, who had only enjoyed half his salary for a year and a half, was swept out of office and superseded by a certain François Sannat, who appears to

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 320.

have been his own head clerk. The Constable also was in disgrace and retired for the time to Chantilly, where he again amused himself with building, and employed Bullant to build him the *châtelet*, the smaller building which is all that is now left of the sixteenth-century work at Chantilly. At this date, 1560, Chantilly consisted of a castle built by the d'Orgemont family at the end of the fourteenth century and occupying exactly the site of the modern building. The property came into the possession of the Constable's father in 1495. The Constable himself carried out some considerable alterations here, from 1528 to 1531, with the help of Pierre Chambiges. He preserved the outer wall and its seven towers, but opened up windows and rearranged the house in what M. Macon<sup>1</sup> calls "*le plus pur style de la Renaissance Française*," in other words, the ordinary François I manner, rich in ornament, elaborate dormers, busts of the Emperors and the usual details, but with little pretensions to architecture. A garden was made on the west side of the *château*, extensive farm buildings and a tennis court were erected, and a long gallery, the *Galerie des Cerfs*, which was afterwards decorated in fresco by Niccolo del Abbate.<sup>2</sup> In 1538 the great raised platform where the statue of the Constable now stands was formed in front of the *château*, with bridges to the platform and to the *château*. But there still remained, unoccupied, a small island to the south-west, and here Bullant built the *châtelet*, somewhere about 1560.<sup>3</sup> The building stood apart, and only communicated with the castle by bridges on both floors.<sup>4</sup> In spite of its actually adjoining the older building on which thirty years before the Constable must have spent very large sums, he allowed Bullant a free hand with his new building, and the result is this interesting design, which to some extent summarizes all the peculiarities of Bullant's manner.<sup>5</sup> There are the pairs of columns running through a storey and a half with niches and panels between

<sup>1</sup> "Chantilly et le Musée Condé," 29.

<sup>2</sup> The first reference to this painter in the *Comptes* does not occur till 1556, when he receives 12 livres for a picture for the King's Chamber at Fontainebleau (*Comptes*, i, 285). He is there called "Nicolas l'Abbé."

<sup>3</sup> The exact date is not known. M. Macon supposes it to have been 1559 ("Chantilly," 43). It appears that in 1599 considerable repairs had to be carried out at Chantilly. The "*gros pavillon*" "*à l'angle ouest du petit château*" (p. 53) was found to be in a dangerous state owing to the badness of its foundations, and Pierre Biard, architect, sculptor, and mason, was called in to rebuild it.

<sup>4</sup> The moat between these two was filled up by the Prince de Condé in 1820.

<sup>5</sup> The ground floor was restored by Eugène Lami for the late Duc d'Aumale, and the gallery designed by Duban in 1845.



them, as at Ecouen; the very deep entablature, much too deep for orthodox proportions, with panels the depth of frieze and architrave, and returns for the springing of the semicircular arch, the pediment with its rather awkward returns, and again, as at Ecouen, the uncomfortable habit of simply cutting away the entablature to allow the dormers to pass through, a habit which Blondel regarded as the last possible barbarism in architecture. Yet Bullant was no mere bungler. He thought about his work, and though it is abundantly open to criticism, it has a curious originality. He was seldom content with the ordinary sections, and it is remarkable that the outer side of the *châtelet* next the water appears to be set out on a very slight curve. This may have been due to settlement, or may have been deliberate. Quite what was gained by it is not clear, but Bullant was always making experiments, and may have been attempting some optical subtlety. The profiles of Bullant's mouldings are unlike those of other architects; and I may add they are quite unlike the commonplace sections given in Fréart's parallels. Neither do the proportions shown by Fréart for the Corinthian order tally with the order carried out at Chantilly. Fréart indeed calls Bullant "one of our prime French architects"<sup>1</sup> and compares him favourably with De l'Orme, whom he lost no opportunity of condemning; but Fréart's own technical knowledge was insufficient to give much weight to his opinion on points of technique.

The *châtelet* has been somewhat harshly restored in places, but it is the only complete building by Bullant that has survived. Somehow it escaped the fate of the *château* at the Revolution, when that building was sold by the Government to one of the bands of wreckers who bought old houses and sold them for old materials. In 1793 the great house was pulled down as far as the ground floor, and so it remained till the late Duc d'Aumale restored it,<sup>2</sup> 1876-82, from the designs of M. Daumet. I shall return later to the glories of Chantilly

<sup>1</sup> Evelyn's translation, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> That gallant soldier, as is well known, rewarded the ingratitude of his country by presenting, in 1886, the domain of Chantilly, the *château*, and his magnificent collections, to the Institute of France. The words of his gift have a curious dignity and pathos: "voulant conserver à la France la domaine de Chantilly dans son antiquité, avec ses bois, ses pelouses, ses eaux, ses édifices et ce qu'elles contiennent, trophées, tableaux, livres, archives, objets d'art, tout cet ensemble qui forme comme un monument complet et varié de l'Art Française dans toutes ses branches, et de l'histoire de ma patrie à des époques de gloire, j'ai résolu d'en confier le dépôt à un corps illustré, qui m'a fait l'honneur de me rappeler dans ses rangs, et qui, sans se soustraire aux transformations inévitables des sociétés, échappe à l'esprit de faction comme aux secousses trop brusques, conservant son indépendance au milieu des fluctuations politiques."

under the great Condé, when it was the most famous private house in Europe.

Nothing is known of Bullant's buildings between the completion of the châtelet at Chantilly and 1570, the date of his appointment to succeed De l'Orme at the Tuileries. He had lost his official appointment. The Constable, his principal patron, was no longer the all-powerful personage he had been in the reign of Henri II, and in 1566 he was killed at the battle of St. Denis. Bullant never reached the position at Court held by De l'Orme for a dozen years or so, and by Lescot throughout most of his life. In his enforced leisure he took to writing. His first book, a treatise on sundials, appeared in 1561, followed by a second part dealing with geometry, in 1562. The title of the first part is "*Recueil d'Horlogiographie, contenant la description, fabrication et usage des horloges solaires, par Jehan Bullant, architecte du haut et puissant seigneur, monseigneur le Duc de Montmorency, Pair et connétable de France,*" Paris, 1561. The second part, 1562, is called "*Petit Traicté de géometrie et d'Horlogiographie,*" etc.<sup>1</sup> In a dedication to his patron Bullant apologizes for the rudeness and artlessness of his language, because he was no Latinist.<sup>2</sup> As Berty points out, this was not the language that De l'Orme used about himself, but then Bullant was not an Abbé and a King's Councillor.

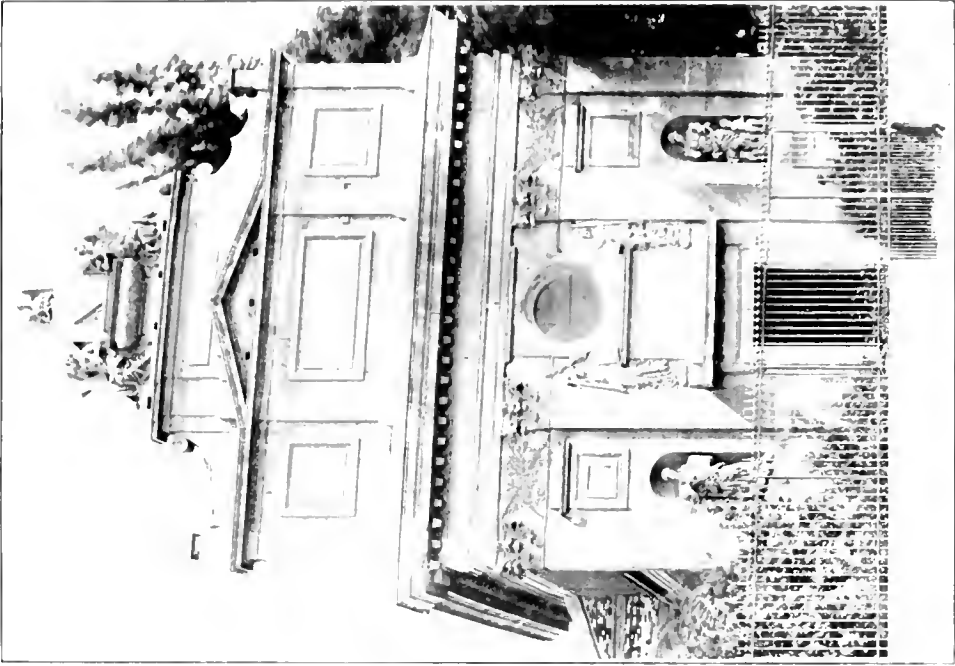
Bullant followed up these works with a treatise on the five orders, according to the rules of Vitruvius, published in 1564, and in a second edition in 1568 "for the use of all workmen using the compass and the square."<sup>3</sup> This book, which went through four editions, no doubt added to the reputation he had already gained in his work for the Constable, and on the death of De l'Orme, in January 1570, Bullant was appointed to succeed him, both at the Tuileries and at St. Maur. His appointment appears to have dated from 7th January 1570,<sup>4</sup> and his salary for the Tuileries was five hundred livres a year, a notable decline from the twelve hundred drawn by De l'Orme and Primaticcio, and once assigned, but never paid, to Bullant himself. Catherine de Médicis was in constant embarrassment: money was always wanted, and seldom forthcoming, for her extravagant undertakings; tradesmen were only paid on account; work is noted in the accounts as held over for lack of funds; and buildings executed in 1570-6 and passed in

<sup>1</sup> See Berty, "*Les Grands Architectes,*" 154-5, for the various editions.

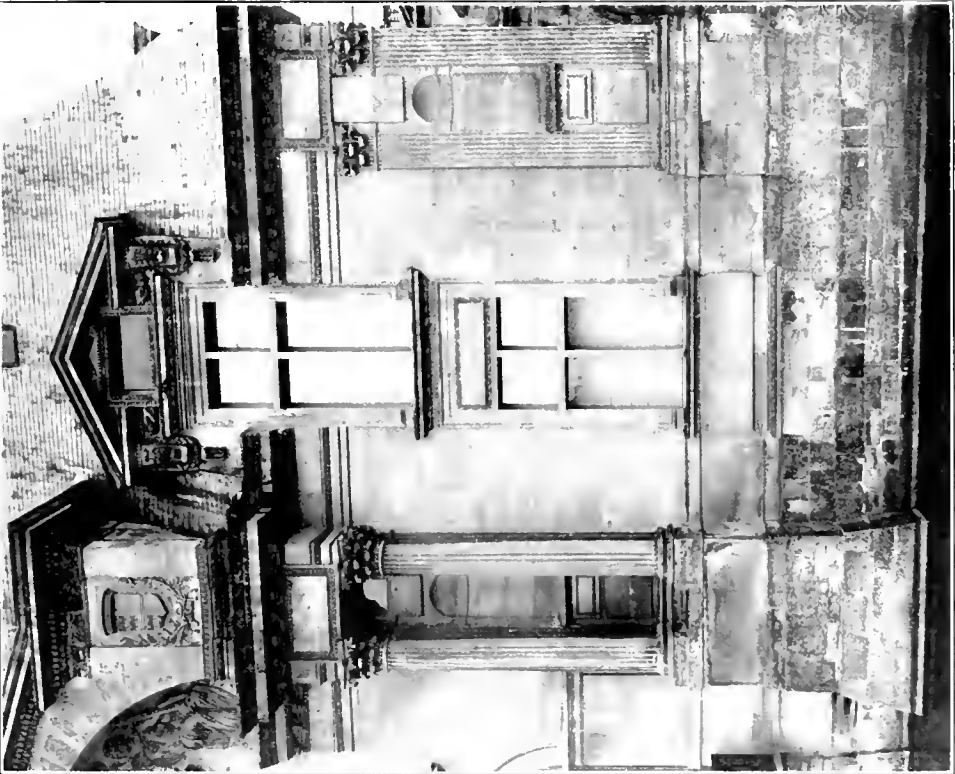
<sup>2</sup> "*Vouloir excuser la rudesse et malaornement de mon dit langage, parceque je ne suis Latin.*"

<sup>3</sup> "*Reigle générale d'architecture des cinq manières de colonnes,*" etc.

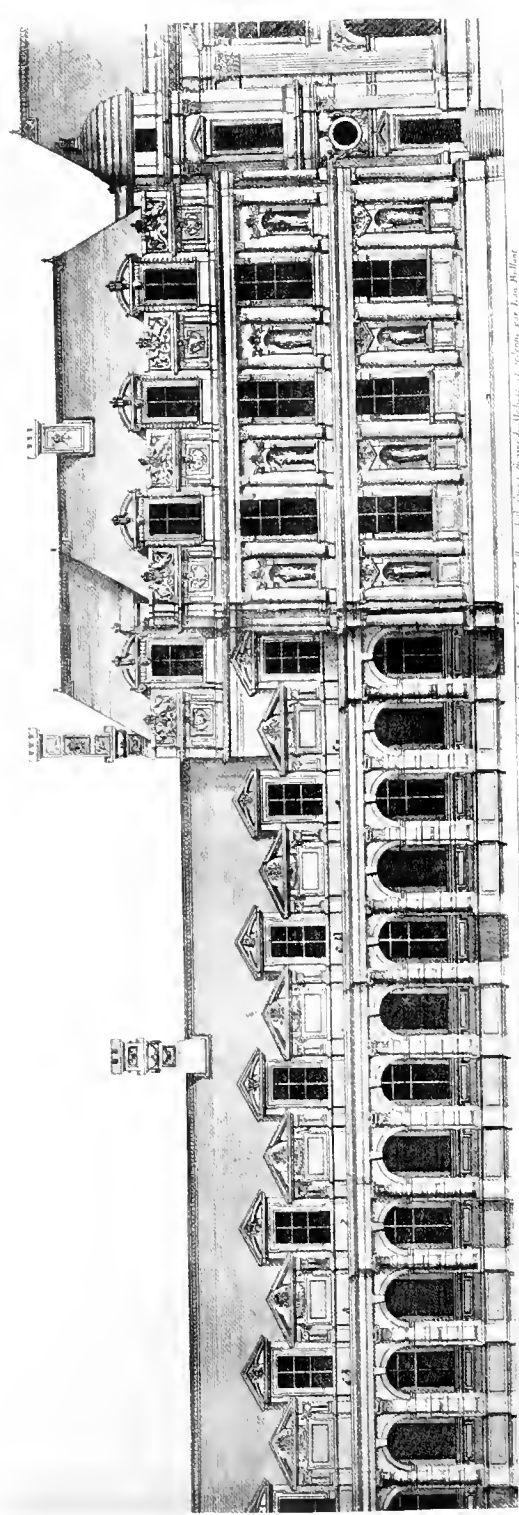
<sup>4</sup> *Comptes*, ii, 348.



ÉGLISE DE L'ESPRIT-SAINTE (P. 100)



ÉGLISE DE L'ESPRIT-SAINTE (P. 100)



M. de la Roche

THE TULERIES (P. 103)  
ELEVATION: TO THE LEFT BY DE L'ORLÉANS, TO THE RIGHT BY BULFANI

1577, were not paid for till 1586.<sup>1</sup> It is probable, however, that Bullant was paid independently for other work.<sup>2</sup> Primaticcio also died in 1570, and it is supposed that Bullant succeeded him in the post of Controller of the Royal Buildings, which included Fontainebleau and the Chapel of the Valois.

At this date, 1570, only a small part of De l'Orme's great scheme for the Tuileries was completed. As shown in Du Cerceau, the grand staircase was only carried up to the first floor, the two double dormers on either side of it and the low building beyond for four bays are shown, but not the upper part. If this view is to be relied on, the central staircase must have been continued by Bullant from De l'Orme's design, though it was not actually completed till the reign of Henri IV. In the additions made to the north and south of the existing buildings, Bullant did not confine himself to the original design. He introduced his favourite motive of pairs of columns, with a niche between, abandoned De l'Orme's design of a ground floor and an attic storey, and designed a façade of two storeys, with an elaborate attic of dormers with pediments, separated by richly ornamented panels. Above the niches he allowed himself the ridiculous caprice of cutting his pediment in two, reversing the halves, and setting them back to back. Was this, too, one of Catherine de Médicis' hopeless suggestions? It is unworthy of the masculine commonsense shown in most of Bullant's designs, and was at once and very properly seized upon by all competent critics as wholly detestable. Sauval, on the other hand, says that the first order was so finely designed that the most learned architects "ne trouvent rien dans l'antique de plus grand ni de meilleur."<sup>3</sup>

With this exception, the transition from the lower building of De l'Orme to the higher façade which Bullant designed, was managed skilfully enough and with some consideration of the intention of the original design. When the building was extended, under Henri IV, and again under Louis XIV, what was left standing of the original design was absolutely ignored in the new. Blondel, who is very severe on the Tuileries,<sup>4</sup> says that the want of unity in the design, both in the

<sup>1</sup> Berty, "Topographie Historique du vieux Paris," ii, 33.

<sup>2</sup> Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," 160, quotes a marginal note to the entry in the accounts of the Tuileries, 1570-1, from which it appears that his total salary for the Tuileries and Saint Maur was 1,000 livres a year.

<sup>3</sup> "Hist. et Antiq.," ii, 53.

<sup>4</sup> "Architecture Française," iv, 79 *et seq.* Blondel attributes the upper part of the two-storey building to Bullant, not to De l'Orme, and speaks of its "ridicule décoration"; it was, however, part of De l'Orme's original design.

Tuilleries and in other important buildings, was nearly always due to "the uncertainty of masters of the art on the principles of good architecture, the vain belief that people have that they are better than those who preceded them, the disinclination to follow another man's view, and the fury, with which architects are devoured, of wishing to build something new, when all they have to do is to imitate what is there." Bullant to some extent escapes this criticism, whatever may be said of Du Cerceau, Le Vau, and Dorbay, but the Tuilleries, as it was when burnt by the Commune, must have been a hopeless muddle of different intentions and incongruous scales.

Bullant's connection with the Tuilleries only lasted till 1572. In that year Catherine de Médicis, who was exceedingly superstitious, stopped the building, in consequence of the prediction of a fortune-teller, that she would perish under the ruins of a house, and that St. Germain would be fatal to her.<sup>1</sup> The Tuilleries was in the parish of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, and this was enough for Catherine, who abandoned all further buildings at the Tuilleries, except in the gardens, and bought and rebuilt the Hôtel de Soissons in the parish of St. Eustache at Paris.<sup>2</sup> Here she built herself her fifth house,<sup>3</sup> containing among other things a lofty Doric column, with a newel staircase formed inside, intended to form an observatory for her astrological efforts. Architecture and astrology divided her time with politics, but what with her unpunctuality in payment, and her constant habit of interference, her architects must have had a very difficult time. De l'Orme, in the dedication of his treatise on Architecture to the Queen, says she took the trouble to "pourtraire et esquicher" the buildings of the Tuilleries, giving actual measurements; and it is unfair both to De l'Orme and to Bullant to criticize designs which seem to have been dictated in the main by an exceedingly troublesome employer. The Hôtel de Soissons is now entirely destroyed, with the exception of the columns in the Halle aux Blés. There is a view of it by Israel Sylvestre in the Hôtel Carnavalet, which shows a three-storey building set back

<sup>1</sup> Piganiol de la Force mentions the curious coincidence that when Catherine died at Blois in 1589 the priest who attended her in her last moments was named Julien de S. Germain, Bishop in partibus of Nazareth and Abbé of Chalis. "Description de Paris," ii, 364.

<sup>2</sup> Mezeray, "Hist. de France," quoted by Berty, "Top. Hist.," ii, 52. Some important works were carried out in the gardens, including a grotto by Bernard Palissy. Building operations in the Tuilleries were not resumed till the reign of Henri IV.

<sup>3</sup> Though the Tuilleries were given up, she had work going on at Chenonceaux, at St. Maur, near Paris, and a house in the Rue des Poulies at Paris.

in an enclosed forecourt with square advanced wings, and the column rising above the roofs. The Hôtel de Soissons concludes the list of Bullant's known buildings. He died in March 1578, a month after the death of Lescot.

One building not known to be by Bullant shows his influence in such a remarkable way, that although it is stated to have been designed by another man, a certain Claude de Foucques, otherwise unknown, the evidence of the building makes it not improbable that it was one of Bullant's later works. According to De Montaignon, Claude de Foucques' name appears in a specification and contract for the work, dated 1566.<sup>1</sup> This was the year in which Diane de Poitiers, Duchesse de Valentinois, died at Limours, and the chapel was erected to her memory. Foucques, or Foucquières, is there described as architect of the Cardinal of Lorraine, and of the Duc d'Aumale, son-in-law of Diane de Poitiers; but he is nowhere else mentioned. De Montaignon does not quote the text in full and it is therefore impossible to examine the statement, but it is curious that this total stranger should have been appointed in De l'Orme's life-time, and it is possible that the contract quoted does not refer to the building actually executed, or that Foucques or Foucquières was the contractor only. The building, which is shown in Du Cerceau's view of Anet, was not consecrated till 1577. What happened between 1566, the date of the contract, and 1577 is not known, and there was at any rate plenty of time in this interval to reconsider the whole scheme and obtain fresh designs from some well-known architect such as Bullant. It is well known that the term "architect" was used very loosely in the sixteenth century for anyone connected with buildings, and without further evidence it is difficult to accept this perfectly unknown man as the architect of so fine a building. The same hand may perhaps be traced in the brick and stone pavilions and other details at Anet, which are probably not by De l'Orme,<sup>2</sup> and appear to be later than the main building.

The building I refer to is the Chapelle Funéraire of Diane de Poitiers at Anet, consecrated in 1577, and architecturally much finer than any building now remaining at Anet. The chapel consists of an oblong nave without aisles, covered in with a brick barrel vault. At the east end is an apse with a half-dome, to the right and left of which are

<sup>1</sup> In the possession of M. Fillon.

<sup>2</sup> Further particulars and illustrations of the figures on the west front of the Chapelle Funéraire will be found in M. de Montaignon's articles in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts," "Diane de Poitiers," 1878, vol. 1-289; 1879, vol. 1-152.

small circular brick chambers, domed, and a newel staircase leading to the space between the vaulting and the roof. The interior is in red brick, with panels framed by bands of white stone, and the barrel vault shows tracings of having been decorated in panels. The south front is all in stone with inlay panels of red and gray marble, Corinthian pilasters, niches and figures. The whole design seems to be in elaborate contradiction of all the points on which De l'Orme had insisted in his design for the private chapel. On the west façade there is the great Corinthian order, and the niches on pedestals with panels above, that Bullant had used at Ecouen, and the section of the main cornice closely follows that of the Châtelet at Chantilly, the architrave being identical, and the cornice showing the same rather unusual treatment of the modillions. There are just the variations one might expect between the work done by a man not perfectly certain of himself, and work done in his latter days with the full experience of age. But what is most remarkable about the building is its resolute refusal of all merely technical ornament in the interior. There are none of the orders and entablatures and ingenious details in which De l'Orme delighted. The architecture is grave and severe. We have at length come upon an artist, whether he was Bullant, or the mysterious Fouquières, who was strong enough to dispense with the tricks of the trade, and rely for his effect on the proportion and ordinance of his building.

No further evidence has so far been discovered as to the authorship of the Chapelle Funéraire at Anet. The suggestion of Bullant is based on the internal evidence of the design, and if in fact this unknown Fouquières was the architect, he ought, on the merits of this building alone, to take his rank on equal terms with Bullant and De l'Orme.

Of the famous trio, De l'Orme, Bullant, and Lescot, Bullant was the finest artist. He started with less advantages than either Lescot or De l'Orme, but his natural genius carried him to a point of attainment never reached by either the one or the other. Lescot, even if he designed his own buildings, was uninspired as a designer, and his work was only saved by Goujon's sculpture, and by a precision of execution which I am convinced should also be attributed to Goujon. De l'Orme, an older man and a sincere student of architecture, mistook knowledge for imagination. He fell into the pitfall that has tripped up many an architect, the snare of archaeology, and an over rigorous science. Bullant was a man of another sort. In all his works it is possible to trace the idea, a serious attempt to realize some great architectural conception. He was not exempt from the prevailing weakness for detail,



but whereas to other men of that time detail was all in all, Bullant's imagination moved in larger spaces. He was learning to realize the true fascination of architecture as the art of great forms and rhythmical proportions. Here, too, he was true to the instincts of the French genius. He was feeling his way back to that severe restraint which had been the glory of French mediaeval art in its greatest period and which, later on, will dignify and ennoble the art of such men as François Mansart. In the Greek tragedy it was held that μέγεθός τι, some touch of greatness, the aim at heroic scale, was an essential element. Tragedy was not to deal with the meaner incidents of daily life, but with emotions and actions that are of permanent and universal interest. So too it has been with the arts. The great masters have risen supreme above the multiplicity of details, they have aimed at unity of effect and at a noble simplicity of statement. It is in this quality that Bullant was ahead of his generation. Just as Goujon raised sculpture to a plane that it had not occupied since the great days of mediaeval art, so Bullant, his friend and fellow-worker, was feeling his way to a conception of architecture as an austere and noble art with its own technique, and its own peculiar methods of giving form and reality to the imaginations of the artist. It is too often forgotten that the architect shares with the painter and the sculptor that common ground of emotion and imagination, which is the basis of all art. Each art, architecture not less than painting and sculpture, has its own way of realizing and making intelligible to the world that passes by, that particular conception or phase of thought which has taken possession of the individual artist. But in the far easier search for the picturesque, or in the mere following of fashion, this essential principle is often overlooked, not only by the layman, but to his shame by the architect. In the firm grasp of this principle, in realizing that architecture is an art in and by itself, to the very fullest extent that this can be said of any of the three arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture, Bullant stood alone among his contemporaries. It is not so much on his actual attainments, as for his brave endeavour, and respect for the dignity of his art, that Jehan Bullant ranks with Goujon as one of the bright particular stars of French art in the sixteenth century.

## CHAPTER VII

### LESCOT AND GOUJON

FEW men have done so little for their reputation as Pierre Lescot, Sieur de Clagny, Abbé of Clermont, Canon of Notre Dame and official architect of the Louvre. Historians have treated him with singular respect, placing him in a niche of his own as the finest French designer of the sixteenth century. A sort of legend of some super-eminent distinction of manner has grown up round his name. Thus Sauval<sup>1</sup> says: "Cet architecte fut le premier qui bannit de la France l'architecture Gothique, pour y introduire la belle et grande manière d'y bâtir." Berty<sup>2</sup> repeats this: "Lescot est un des premiers architectes Français qui aient employé le style antique, pur de tout mélange." He is supposed to have excelled his contemporaries in refinement and architectural scholarship, and his fragment of the Louvre is held up as a masterpiece, beyond reproach and cavilling. Yet, in fact, very little is known about Lescot, and what evidence there is points to a different conclusion from that which has been generally accepted.

Pierre Lescot was born at Paris about 1510, and came of a legal family<sup>3</sup> of some distinction. His father was Procureur-Général in the Court of Aids, and his grandfather on his mother's side was Councillor and "maître des requêtes" in the King's household, and second President of the Court of Aids. It was through the latter that Lescot inherited his property at Clagny. Of his early life nothing is known except what can be gathered from a poetical epistle addressed to him by Ronsard.<sup>4</sup> From this prosaic poem we learn that in his early years Lescot showed his artistic instinct by drawing at school when he ought to have been minding his books, and that at the age of twenty he added

<sup>1</sup> "Hist. et Antiq. de la Ville de Paris," ii, 25.

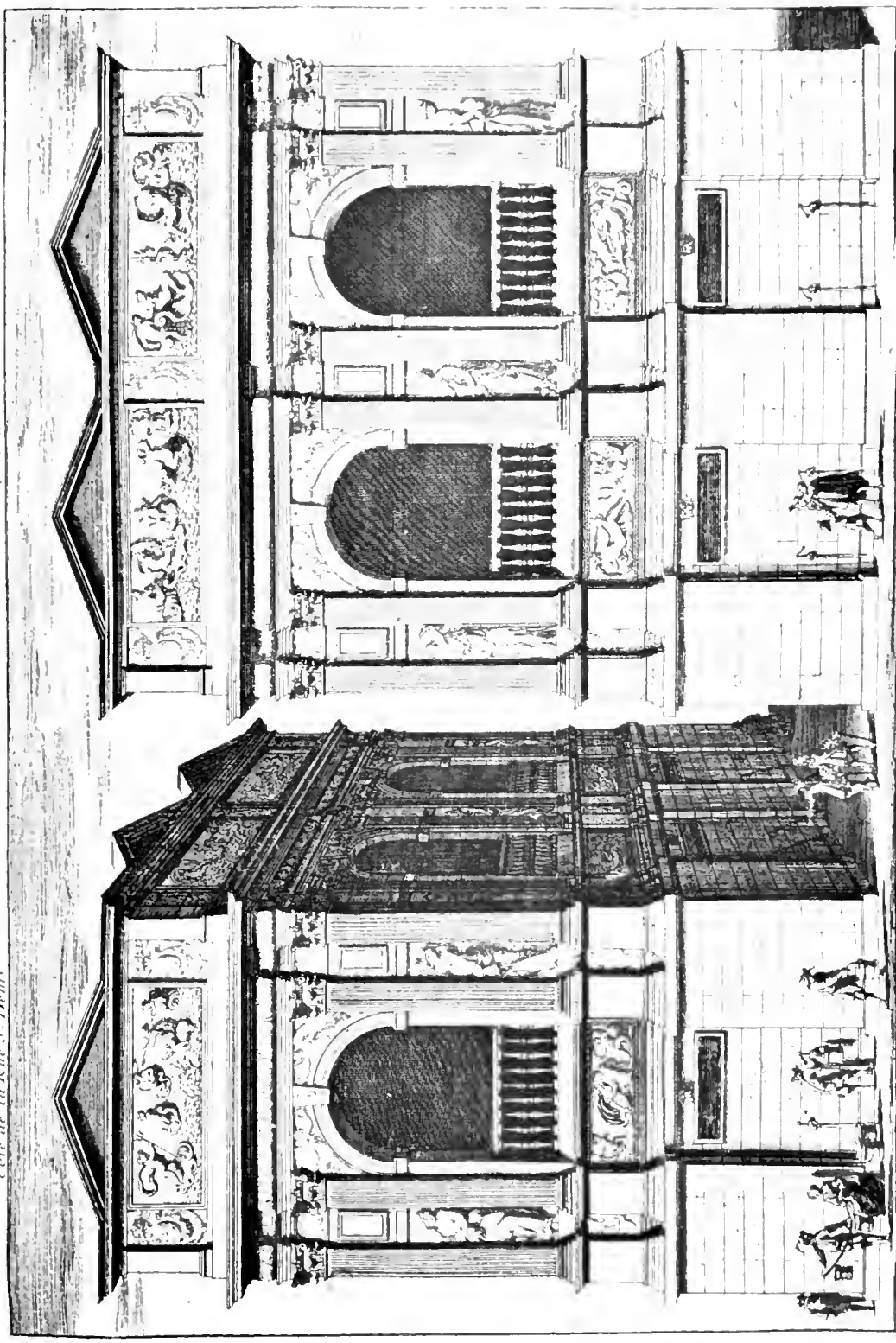
<sup>2</sup> "Les Grands Architectes," p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Berty, "Topographie Historique du Vieux Paris," i, 207, says Lescot is "l'Ecossais," and that a Lescot appears in an account of 1367 as "Cagetier," who was famed for making screens to windows to keep out birds.

<sup>4</sup> Ronsard's "Œuvres," p. 985, quoted by Berty in "Top. Hist. du Vieux Paris," i, 208-9.

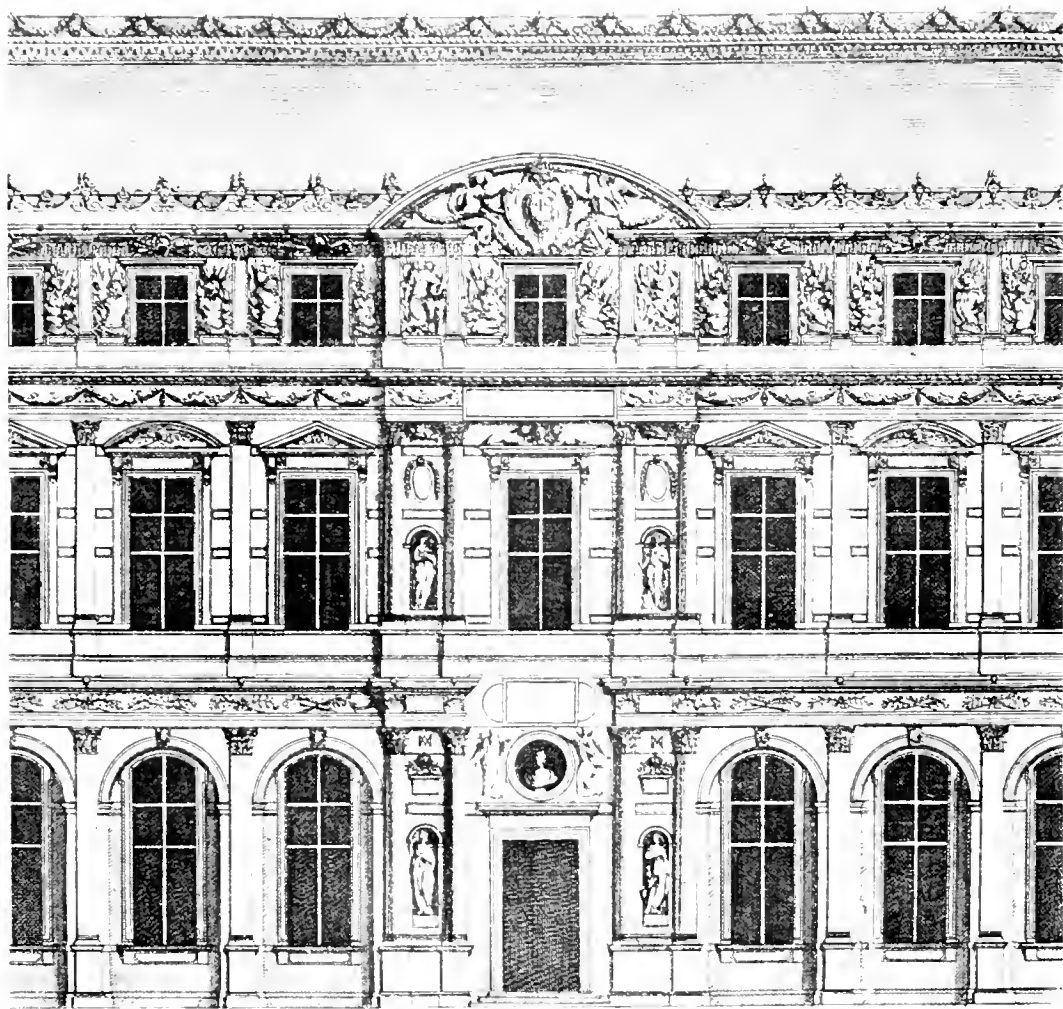
Côté de la Rue au Vin

Côté de la Rue s<sup>t</sup> Denis



LA FONTAINE DE S<sup>t</sup> INNOCENT, rue s<sup>t</sup> Denis et Rue





*L. Moreau del.*

LESCOQ'S DESIGN FOR THE LOUVRE (P. 111)



to his skill in painting the study of mathematics and architecture. Ronsard dwells with much unction on the merit, and indeed condescension of such zeal in a man of good position and inherited means, and continues, that François I loved him more particularly, and that Henri II—not himself conspicuous for scholarship—honoured his learning so much that he made him his favourite table companion. The poem is chiefly valuable as indicating the position that Lescot held at Court. As I have already pointed out, Ronsard lost no opportunity of humiliating De l'Orme, a strong intransigent man, and, by backing Lescot with all his influence, he effectually helped his friend and injured his enemy. Beyond Ronsard's allusion to his studies in the arts, and a complimentary reference to his skill as a painter, in a treatise on money by Jean Bodin, 1578,<sup>1</sup> nothing is known of Lescot's training, there is no evidence that he went to Italy, nor did he produce any works on architecture, such as those of De l'Orme and Bullant, and most of the architects of the time. He first appears on the scene in charge of the *jubé*, or rood-loft, of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, which was being built between 1540 and 1544. Payments are described in the *Comptes* as given to the quarryman and mason in the years 1540-1-2, and to workmen who had been working for 109 weeks on the "pulpit," as it is called in the accounts. Symon le Roy, and Laurence Regnauldin, "ymagiers" whom we have met before at Fontainebleau, appear, 1542-4. Finally, in 1544, when the rood-loft must have been nearly completed, a certain Pierre St. Quentin, master stonecutter, appears in charge under the Sieur de Clagny, and, in the same year, Jean Goujon, "carver of images," receives payment for a "Notre Dame de Pitié," the four evangelists in half relief, six heads of cherubim,<sup>2</sup> and other details for the work. St. Quentin is described in an entry in 1544 as having "le gouvernement des compagnons et conduite du dict pulpitre, sous Monseigneur de Clagny." From another entry<sup>3</sup> it appears that at that date St. Quentin took over the contract from Poireau, the original contractor. The inference to be drawn from these entries is, that in 1544 a change was made in the administration of the work, but there is no indication whatever of any change in the design. A fresh contractor came in, and Lescot was placed in general charge. It will be noted that at the same time Goujon joins Le Roy and

<sup>1</sup> Jean Bodin, "Discours sur le rehaussement et la diminution des monnayes," Paris, 1578, refers to "un [tableau] de M. de Clagny en la galerie de Fontainebleau, qui est un chef-d'œuvre admirable," quoted by Berty.

<sup>2</sup> *Comptes*, ii, 278-290.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 289.

Regnauldin. Lescot had "discovered" Goujon, and it will be found that in every work in which Lescot was engaged, he invariably associated with himself Jean Goujon. The only contemporary mention of Lescot in connection with the *jubé* is the solitary entry in the accounts quoted above, which makes no reference to any design prepared by him, and in no way warrants the assumption that he did, in fact, design the screen. As a matter of fact, it was not till the eighteenth century that he was credited with the design. The *jubé* was destroyed in 1745. Piganiol de la Force describes it as having been formed with three semicircular arches, divided by piers of engaged Corinthian columns. The centre arch formed the principal entrance to the choir. In the two side arches were altars with balustrades. In the spandrels were angels with the instruments of the Passion. The four Evangelists were "sur l'appui du jubé . . . au dessus des colonnes." He says that both in arrangement and execution it was an admirable piece of work, spoilt by over-gilding.<sup>1</sup> The resemblance of this description to the motive of the design for the Louvre will be noted; indeed, it appears to have embodied the one architectural idea which Lescot was capable of conceiving. Lescot and Goujon were also associated in the famous "Fontaine des Innocents" which was built in 1550, at an angle formed by two streets, the Rue aux Fers and the Rue St. Denis, next the Church of the Innocents. The fountain abutted against the church, and was built as an open loggia with two arches at the sides and one at the end. It was taken down in 1785, and rebuilt more or less in its present form, as a detached square pavilion, with a new plinth and additional sculpture, in a manner which gives an entirely false impression of the original design. In the engraving by Mariette, published at the end of the seventeenth century the design is shown with arches flanked by pairs of Corinthian pilasters on a lofty plinth with balustrade between, and above the entablature a low attic storey. The Naiads came between the pilasters, and the panels were below the balustrades and in the attic storey. When the design was first attributed to Lescot I do not know. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, at any rate, it was attributed to Goujon only. Daviler, an extremely competent authority who edited an edition of the works of Anthoine Lepautre, specifically assigns its design to Jean Goujon, "architecte et sculpteur de Henri II,"<sup>2</sup> and makes no mention of Lescot.

<sup>1</sup> "Description de Paris," ii, 194, edit. 1765.

<sup>2</sup> "Les Œuvres d'Architecture d'Anthoine Le Pautre," reprinted Paris, 1751, p. 22. Daviler died in 1700.



Meanwhile Lescot had been called in for the rebuilding of the Louvre. In the reign of François I the Louvre was still an awkward mediaeval castle, consisting of a rectangular enclosure with circular towers engaged at the angles, and on the sides. The inner court measured about 165 feet by 145 feet. At one end of it, a detached donjon tower, 49 feet in diameter, and 96 feet high, to the springing of the roof, towered above the buildings. Such an arrangement François found impossible, and in 1527 he had the donjon taken down, not without some murmurings in Paris. Nothing further was done for the present, the King was busy at Fontainebleau, at Chambord, and the Château de Madrid, and had no leisure for the Louvre; but in the last year of his life, his thoughts went back to his capital, and in April or August,<sup>1</sup> Lescot, as the best-known man at the Court, was appointed architect of the new buildings at the Louvre and the royal buildings in Paris, with full power to conclude all contracts and arrange for the execution of the works. The patent refers to "un grand corps d'hostel au lieu où est à présent la grande salle, dont nous avons fait faire les desseins et ordonnances par vous."<sup>2</sup> Here, at any rate, Lescot is referred to as having made the designs, and as having "bonne expérience en fait d'architecture et grande diligence," and as having been fully acquainted by the King with his intentions in regard to the new buildings, "et aussi que vous avons complètement déclaré notre vouloir et intention sur le fait des dits bastiments, au moyen de quoi scaurez, autant bien que nul autre, conduire et vous acquitter de la dite charge à notre grez et contentement." The patent dwells particularly on this latter point, of Lescot's intimate knowledge of the King's wishes; for François, up to the very end, meant to be his own architect, and all he wanted was some supple and intelligent servant to put his ideas into shape, and to act as building policeman. Twenty-five years before, Florimond de Champeverne, valet-de-chambre, would have been intrusted with the task, and, in view of François' methods of building, the evidence of the patent in regard to Lescot's capacity as an architect is not so conclusive as might appear.

François died in 1547, and one of the first steps of Henri II was to confirm Lescot in his appointment to carry on the work in accordance with the design and specification made for the late King.<sup>3</sup> Lescot started the work immediately after Easter 1547, but in 1549 a change

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 256.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 249. The date is wrongly given as 1556 instead of 1546.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 254.

of plan was decided on. Lescot was commissioned to prepare a new design and specification, and to pull down so much of the work already done as was necessary to carry it out.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile he had received no payment, and it is not till 1550 that a salary of 100 livres a month is assigned him, the usual salary of first-rate artists at the Court.<sup>2</sup> Guillaume Guillain and Pierre St. Quentin were the master-masons (Lescot was faithful to his friends), Scibec of Carpi was brought from Fontainebleau to act as master-joiner, and Jean Goujon was there in 1555 "sculptor in stone to the King."<sup>3</sup> Further payments occur in 1557 and 1558. In 1559 Henri II died, and Lescot was again confirmed in his appointment by the young King, François II,<sup>4</sup> and after his brief reign, by his successor, Charles IX, in 1561. In this year Primaticcio managed to divert to Fontainebleau 6,000 livres from the grant of 24,000 livres made for the Louvre.<sup>5</sup> The Court was undermined with intrigues, which were not confined to politics, but affected every relation of life. For year after year Catherine de Médicis pursued her barren and unprofitable policy of *equipoise*, setting back one year the men she had advanced the year before. The high ideals and enthusiasms of finer spirits wasted under this system of check and countercheck. De l'Orme died, a disappointed man, and the disappearance of Goujon, soon after Catherine had got firm hold of the reins, is ominous of the wastage of good men which resulted from her disastrous methods of government.

Lescot's design is believed to have provided for the entire rebuilding of the rectangular court of the mediaeval Louvre. The work was begun on the west side, facing towards the Tuileries, and was carried southwards from the present entrance towards the river, returning eastward along the river front in the direction of St. Germain l'Auxerrois and Notre Dame. The staircase near the present west entrance is possibly all that remains of the work done in the reign of François I, the rest having been pulled down to make way for the revised plans; and the vault of this staircase dates from the time of Henri II. The new scheme included the building to the south of the staircase containing the famous *Salle des Caryatides*, and the Tribunal on the ground floor, up to and including the pavilions at the south-west angle.<sup>6</sup> An entry

<sup>1</sup> *Comptes*, i, 258. The patent was signed by the King, Paris, 10th July 1549, and witnessed by the Cardinal de Guise, the Duc d'Aumale, and the Constable Anne de Montmorency.

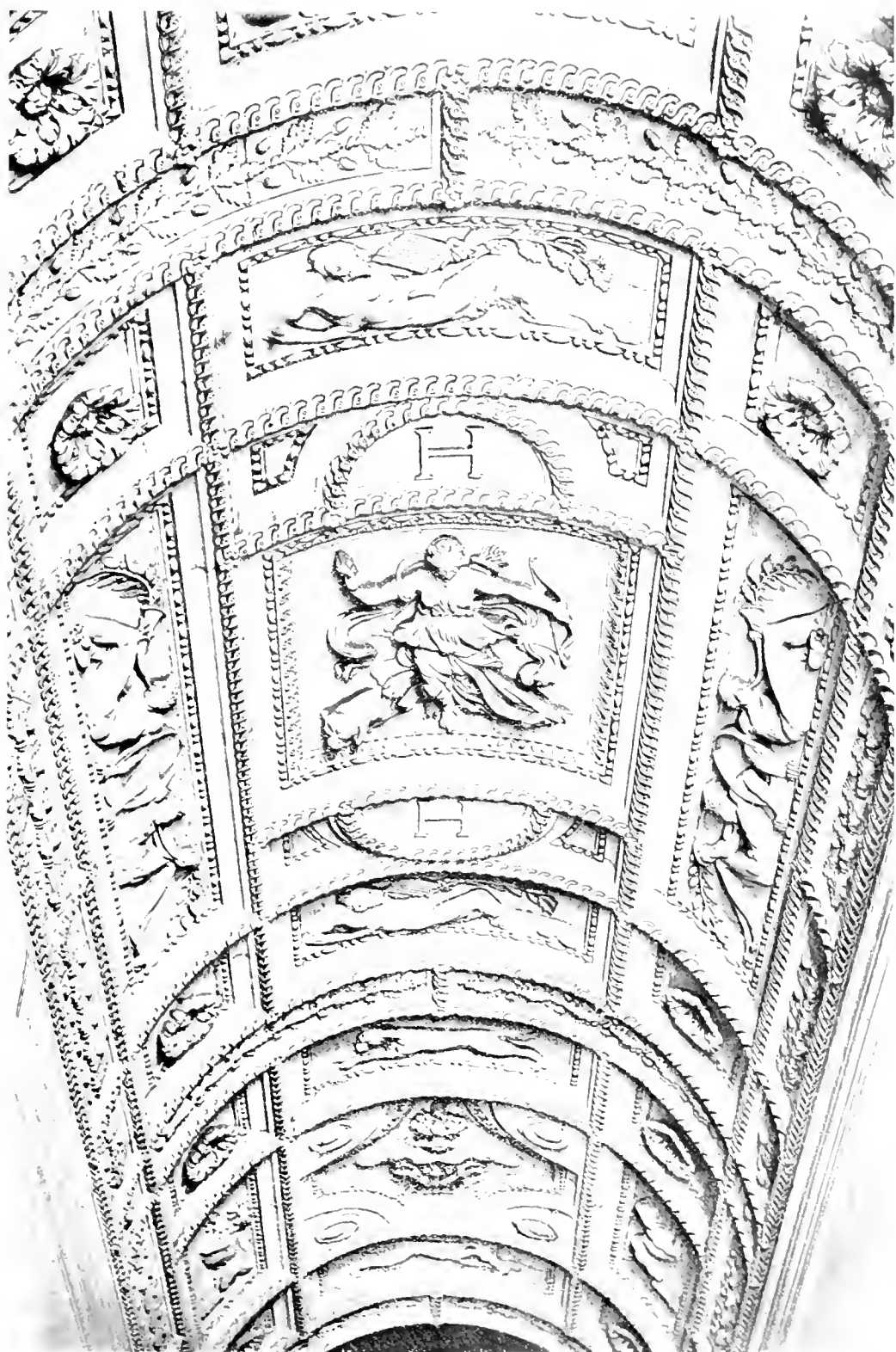
<sup>2</sup> Primaticcio received the same salary in 1563. *Comptes*, ii, 108.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 261.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 381.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 40.

<sup>6</sup> The contract with Goujon for the *Caryatides* was made in 1550.



VAULT OF STAIRCASE IN THE LOUVRE, CONSTRUCTED UNDER HENRY II (P. 112)



occurs in 1558<sup>1</sup> of payment to Estienne Cramoy, sculptor, for figures and enrichments to the ceiling of the king's chamber and antechamber, the former being on the first floor of the south-west pavilion.<sup>2</sup> It appears that by 1565 the south or river façade was well advanced. In that year there is an important entry, of payments to "Etienne Camoy" or Cramoy and Martin le Fort, sculptors, for having carved certain festoons in stone round marble ovals between the columns in the second storey, and for having carved below and at the sides of the three windows of the upper storey trophies of arms, "corselets, toraces, tarques, parvois, expées, dagues, arcques, carquoys, et autres sortes d'armes antiques";<sup>3</sup> also for having carved in marble tablets "K's" with an imperial crown, enriched with branches of bay: "all these works being in the part now being built for the lodgement of the Queen on the river side." When Perrault made his additions to the south side of the Louvre these disappeared. Considerable sums were spent on the building in 1568.<sup>4</sup> Lescot received his salary of 1,200 livres for that year, but after that date no further mention of him occurs in the Comptes, and nothing further is known of his work at the Louvre between that year and his death, in 1578.<sup>5</sup> Though he was not disturbed in his charge of the building, his work was probably limited to the superintendence of the south wing; and the curious thing is that when the little gallery was built at the south-west angle, and the great gallery between the Louvre and the Tuileries begun along the river front,<sup>6</sup> Lescot does not appear to have been consulted, and the work was placed in other hands. It almost looks as if in his latter days Lescot had lost the source of his inspiration, and was not prepared or invited to undertake further designs. Palustre laid it down as almost certain that Lescot designed the chapel of the Valois. This building was one of Catherine de Médicis' fantastic schemes that were never realized. She conceived the idea of a vast memorial chapel to hold the tombs of the later Valois, and plans were prepared of a circular building, 100 feet in external diameter, with six chapels opening out of the circular centre. On the outside was a Doric order, surmounted by an Ionic order with a balustrade. Above the second storey rose a third, set back from the balustrade, and carrying

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, i, 356.

<sup>2</sup> See Berty, plan, "Top. Hist. du vieux Paris," i, 229.

<sup>3</sup> Comptes, ii, 112.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 137-140.

<sup>5</sup> Lescot died in his town house at Notre Dame, September 1578, one month before Bullant, who died at Ecouen in October of the same year.

<sup>6</sup> Berty, "Top. Hist. du vieux Paris," i, 259. The order for the grand gallery was given in 1566, but very little was actually done at that date.

a dome and lantern. The building, which was begun in 1560, stood in the cemetery of St. Denis, just north of the church,<sup>1</sup> and the tomb of Henri II, now at St. Denis, was to stand in the centre. The work was carried on by fits and starts. Lescot is said by Palustre to have superintended it till 1570, when he was superseded by Bullant. Nothing was done between 1572 and 1582, when Baptiste Androuet du Cerceau was appointed architect, and he carried the building up to the terrace above the second order. There the work appears to have stopped, and it was pulled down in 1719,<sup>2</sup> as the cheapest way of finishing up the business. Various drawings of it were published in the seventeenth century,<sup>3</sup> and it is on the evidence of these, and some resemblance to the elevation of the Louvre, that Palustre attributed the design to Lescot. It might, however, with much more reason be attributed to De l'Orme, on account of the resemblance in plan to the private Chapel of Anet. As a matter of fact, Primaticcio was in charge of the tombs of the kings and queens of France,<sup>4</sup> and Lescot is never mentioned in connection with them. The probability is that De l'Orme made the design for the Chapel, but was superseded by Primaticcio in the execution of the work, after De l'Orme was dismissed from his post of Surveyor-General. A certain De Retz succeeded Primaticcio on the death of the latter in 1570, and Bullant succeeded De Retz in 1572.<sup>5</sup> The claim of Lescot must in any case be dismissed.

The Hôtel Carnavalet has been attributed to Lescot, but probably the only ground for this suggestion is that Jean Goujon undoubtedly executed some of the sculpture here. De Montaiglon contended that this house was begun for De Ligneris, President of Parliament in 1544, from Lescot's designs, but that the work was broken off in 1546, and not resumed till 1578, when the house was bought for Mme. de Carnavalet;<sup>6</sup> but he overlooked the crescents, the double D and H and fleur-de-lis on the soffits of the side entrance, which show that the work was done after 1547 and before 1578. The Louvre and the Jubé of St. Germain l'Auxerrois are the only works with which Lescot is known, on authentic evidence, to have been connected. His share in the Jubé

<sup>1</sup> Jacques de Breul, "Le théâtre des antiquitez de Paris," ed. 1639, p. 840.

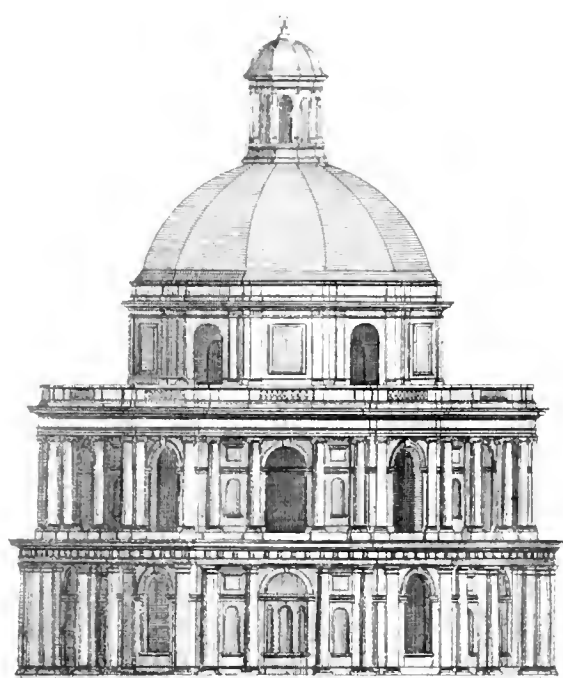
<sup>2</sup> Some of the fragments are still to be seen in the Parc Monceau at Paris.

<sup>3</sup> Prints and engravings of it were made by Israel Sylvestre, by Martellange, and by Marot, who shows it as completed (plates 106, 107, "Le Petit Marot").

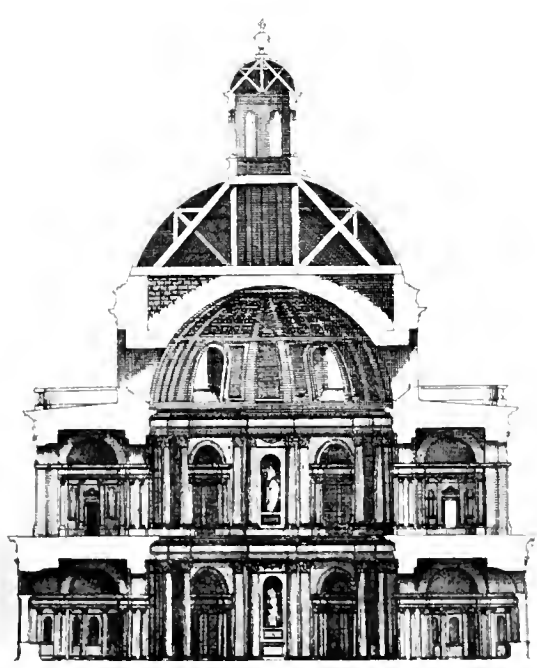
<sup>4</sup> See Comptes, ii, 55, 70, 106, 118, 128.

<sup>5</sup> See Dimier "Le Primatice," 359-372, who attributes the design to Primaticcio, but says as executed it was mostly by Du Cerceau.

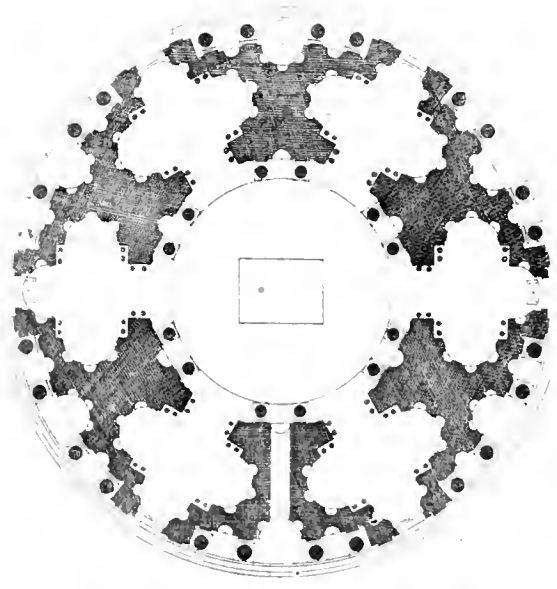
<sup>6</sup> "Gazette des Beaux Arts," 1881, ii, 5-28.



ELEVATION



SECTION



GROUND PLAN

DESIGN FOR THE CHAPEL OF THE VALOIS. ST. DENIS (P. 113)





was of the slightest, as I have already shown. For the Louvre, designs were undoubtedly prepared, which were officially treated as by Lescot, and which continued in his possession till his death. These designs were handed on to Baptiste Androuet du Cerceau, with all papers and documents, and though every vestige of them has since disappeared, they are said by Sauval to have been in existence in 1629.<sup>1</sup>

Two questions present themselves in regard to these designs: first, what was their architectural value? secondly, who made them?

In regard to the designs, the plan was not particularly original. It was to follow the lines of the old Louvre in general outline, and the wings were to be in single thickness, that is, there was no attempt to provide independent access to the various rooms. The merit of the interior consisted almost entirely in its consummate detail. The Hall of the Caryatides, with the Tribunal, some forty-five metres by thirteen, was a splendid room, and some very elaborate work was carried out in the King's room on the first floor. The ceiling was in lime and walnut, richly gilt and coffered and carved. Above the doors were centaurs galloping, and Neptunes reining in sea-horses. Sauval<sup>2</sup> says it was considered the finest thing of its kind in the world, and unique in its way, forgetting that De l'Orme had designed and carried out a somewhat similar ceiling in wood at Fontainebleau in the same year (1558), in which the centre compartment was filled by the sun-god, seated in a chariot drawn by two horses surrounded by the planets, and in the other compartments Venus and Mars, and the arms and devices of the King with branches of bay and other enrichments, "aussy qu'il appartient et qu'il sera advisé et ordonné pour ledit sieur architecte."<sup>3</sup> So far as the interior of the Louvre was concerned, the merits lay chiefly in the decorations. If Lescot designed these, he must have been an accomplished artist, but there can be little doubt that they were designed by the men who carried them out. Sauval<sup>4</sup> says: "Les uns veulent que ce soit Clagny (Lescot), les autres tiennent que c'est François Primatice, abbé de St. Martin, Intendant des bâtimens—Rolland Maillard, Biart Grand-père, Les Hardouyns, Francisque et maître Ponce, ont contribué à la perfection de cette chambre." In regard

<sup>1</sup> Sauval, *op. cit.*, ii, 25, refers to a part of the design as still in existence when he wrote.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 35. Sauval, who calls it "la Chambre de Parade," describes it as "une chambre vraiment royale." The carvings were all painted and gilt, and gave, he says, the appearance of a ceiling of bronze. The musicians assured him that it was the best room in Paris for "la musique douce." Sauval's description is worth careful study, as it gives an excellent idea of the decorative art of the time.

<sup>3</sup> *Comptes*, i, 372.

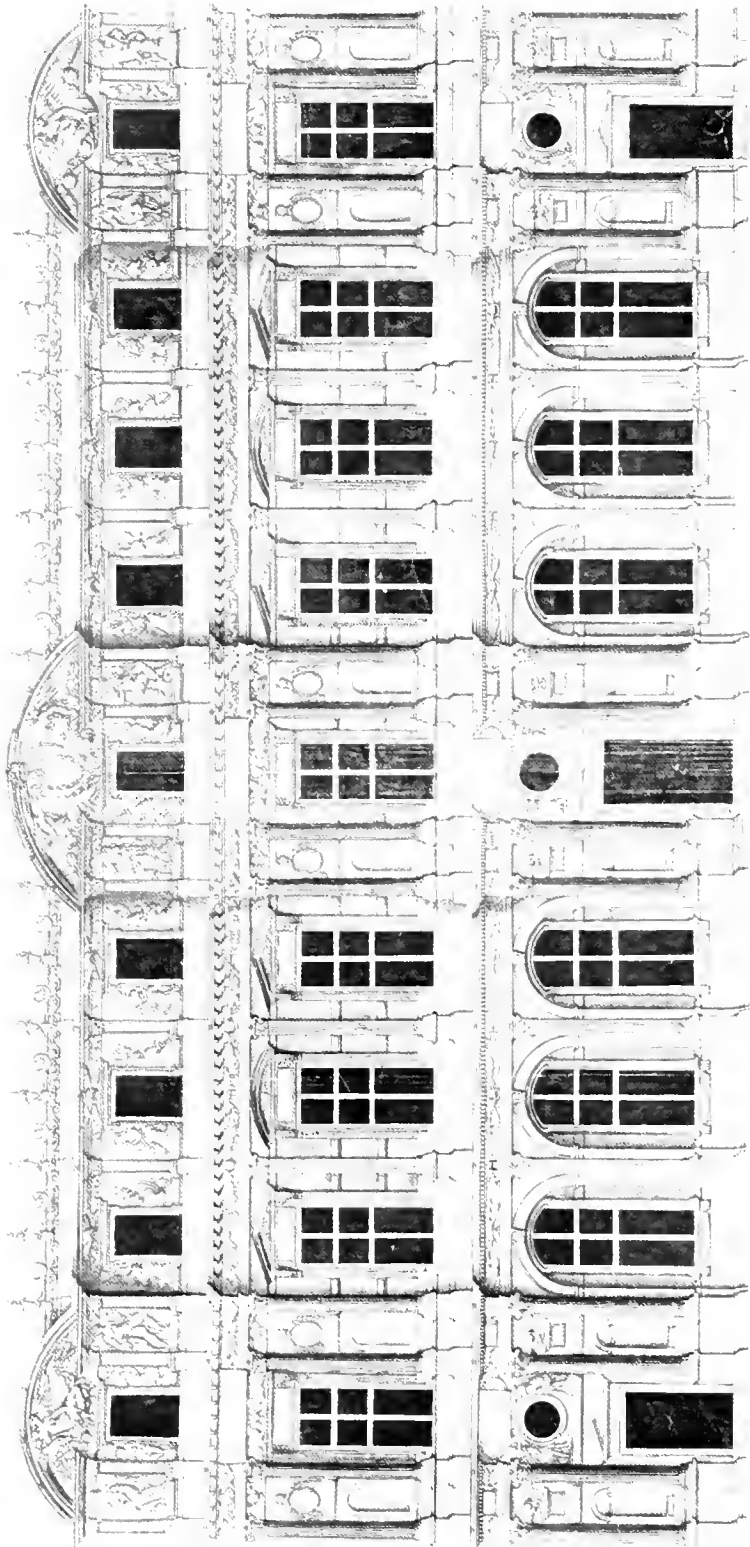
<sup>4</sup> Sauval, ii, 35.

to the exterior, the design of the façade was made before 1550, and was technically in advance of any neo-classic yet done in France in the refinement and accomplishment of its detail. So far, the nearest approach to work of this level had been De l'Orme's first design for St. Maur, and the façade to the court of Ancy-le-Franc. In Lescot's design there is a distinct reminiscence of the ground floor arcades of Ancy-le-Franc. There is some ground for believing that Ancy-le-Franc was designed by Serlio, and the story that Serlio prepared a design for the Louvre which was set aside in favour of Lescot's has never been proved or disproved. Did Lescot avail himself of this rejected design? and how was it possible for a man who, so far as is known, had not been in Italy, and had certainly not studied architecture from his youth up, as De l'Orme had done, to arrive, *per saltum*, at this perfection of detail? At this period the tradition of neo-classic was not yet established in France, each man founded his manner on his personal study and observation, and it is a well-known historical fact that the masters of modern architecture have in every case only arrived at the full perfection of their manner through a series of experiments and even failures in actual buildings. Lescot had had no such experience. His slight connection with the rood-loft at St. Germain l'Auxerrois was barely enough to bring him into touch with practical architecture, and though we have Ronsard's authority for his enthusiastic interest in architecture, that is a very different thing from the minute and laborious study necessary to the attainment of any mastery in the art. Architecture is not an art that can be mastered by merely looking at it, and the intelligent interest of the amateur, even when guided by a fine natural taste, is by no means adequate to the task of conceiving a design and carrying it through in detail. For whatever one may think of the design as a whole, there is no denying its technical accomplishment. On the other hand, considered as an architectural composition, Lescot's façade is weak and monotonous. The three bays to the left of the entrance (Pavillon de l'Horloge) have slight projections, and the arcades over the windows on the ground-floor are too shallow for any effective shadow, so that the general effect, seen from the opposite side of the court, is flat, and the architectural features appear thin and wiry and overpowered by the sculpture. It is only fair to add that, as Lescot's design was only made for a court one quarter the size of the present courtyard of the Louvre, he is hardly to be criticized for faults which become apparent in the façade as seen from the opposite side of the present courtyard.<sup>1</sup> It is evident, how-

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Mr. W. H. Ward for calling my attention to this.



Architectural drawing of a decorative frieze or cornice, featuring a repeating pattern of stylized acanthus leaves and scrolls.



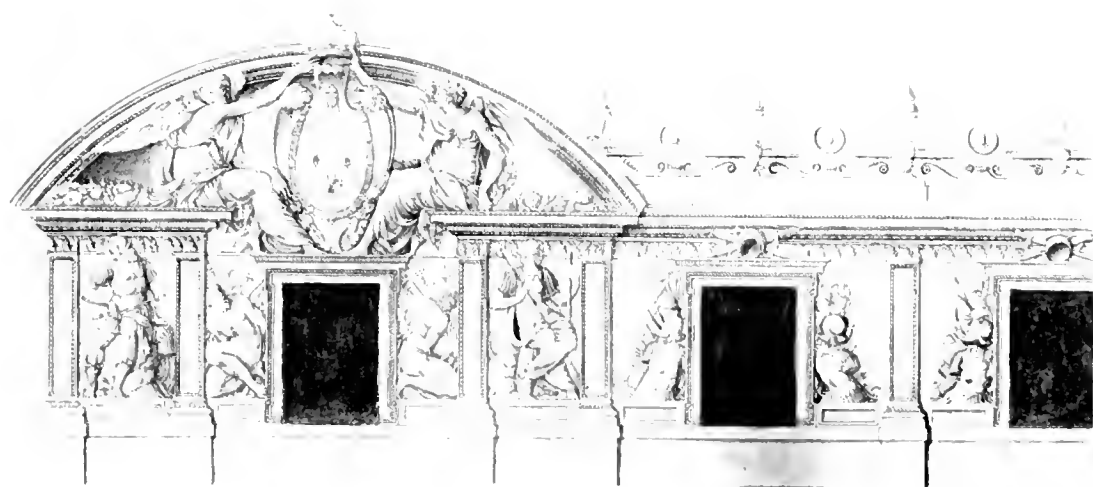
Ce dessin est la face des corps de la salle du Louvre par le dedans des colonnes

[Dessiné par Lescot]

THE LOUVRE: INTERNAL FAÇADE ATTRIBUTED TO LESCOT (P. 116)



THE CARYATIDES IN THE LOUVRE (P. 115)

*(Du Corneille de)*

DETAIL OF THE UPPER STORY: THE LOUVRE (P. 117)

*(Du Corneille de)*



ever, that the designer was more intent on sculpture than on architecture, for there is little attempt to keep the two in scale and relation to each other. The niches are too small for any figure that could possibly stand up against the colossal figures on the upper storey. It is true that these figures were carried out after Goujon had fled to Italy, the master hand, that might have kept the scale and balance of the design, was no longer there, and Lescot, left to himself, was powerless to control the exuberance of inferior men. Lescot's design for the Louvre, I call it so for convenience, is much what one would expect of an amateur whose ideas are translated into practical shape by a skilful sculptor, with very unusual knowledge of architectural detail, and a keen eye for opportunities of sculpture. But it is not a great composition. It shows little sensibility to light and shade, to the possibilities of mass and outline. Considered as architecture, it is timid and commonplace, only redeemed by the perfection of its detail, and Goujon's magnificent sculpture.

I have already called attention to two facts: first, that Lescot never undertook a building unless Goujon was associated with him; and secondly, that Goujon disappeared from the scene after 1562, and that, from that date forward, Lescot is not credited with any designs. The inference seems to me very strong that Goujon was the designer of Lescot's buildings, and that Lescot was the influential and accomplished amateur at Court who got the work and saw it through, and steadily drew his 1,200 livres a year for the last eight and twenty years of his life. There is no direct evidence for this conclusion, but it is the only suggestion that gives an intelligible meaning to the curious facts of Lescot's history. Even De Montaignon admitted that he knew no other example of such a remarkable collaboration as that of Lescot and Jean Goujon. The practice is not unknown at the present day, and we have, in our own architecture of the eighteenth century, a somewhat similar case in Kent and Lord Burlington, the latter the reputed architect of famous buildings which he never designed, and Kent the accommodating artist who lived in his house and credited his designs to his lordship's happy invention.

Goujon, whose fame now rests entirely on his sculpture, was as a matter of fact an architect of admitted reputation and attainments, and was perfectly capable of supplying that technical knowledge the absence of which I cannot help suspecting in Lescot. He was an architect, moreover, who had worked in the excellent school of the mason's yard. Nothing is known of his early training. He is first heard of at

Rouen, where he was employed at St. Maclou and in the Cathedral, 1540-2. At St. Maclou he made the black marble columns supporting the organ-gallery, and parts of the famous door at the west end.<sup>1</sup> In the Cathedral he made the figure of Georges d'Amboise the younger, for the d'Amboise monument, in 1541-2.<sup>2</sup> This figure was destroyed, ten years later, in order that d'Amboise might figure on the tomb in his Cardinal's robes. The Brezé monument was being put up at the same time on the opposite side of the choir, and tradition has always credited Goujon with part of this work. It is known, however, that a sculptor of Rouen named Quesnel made two of the figures<sup>3</sup> in the lower part of the monument, and the caryatides bearing the upper part of the entablature, fine as they are, have a certain angularity and awkwardness never found in Goujon's work. It has been suggested that Quesnel was Goujon's master. If Goujon did any work on this monument, I incline to think it was the wonderful frieze of the entablature, and possibly the seated figure of Force at the top of the monument, with a bit in her mouth, the left hand resting on the hilt of a sword, the right right strangling a serpent.

In 1544 Goujon was in Paris, working on the rood screen of St. Germain, as already described, with Simon le Roy and Lawrence Reynauldin, and appears in the *Comptes* as "tailleur d'ymages." It must have been after this date that he, or Ponce, carved the splendid panels of lions on either side of the entrance to the Hôtel Carnavalet, and the figure with the cornucopia on the key-stone. In Andot and Potier's work, the figures of the four seasons on the side of the court are also attributed to Goujon, but if De Montaignon's account of the Hôtel Carnavalet is correct, these figures must have been executed after Goujon's death, as is probable in any case, for they are not up to the standard of his work. The rest of the figures were executed by Van Opstal, after Mansart altered the building. Little of the original building remains; according to Blondel it was remodelled by François Mansart in 1634, and the panels by the entrance are possibly not in their original position.<sup>4</sup> They are the finest thing of their kind

<sup>1</sup> All the wooden doors of the west front and north transept have been attributed to him, but only one of them, the northernmost of the west doors, resembles his manner. At this period he was known as "tailleur de pierre, et masson."

<sup>2</sup> Deville, "Tombeaux de la Cathédrale de Rouen," 126.

<sup>3</sup> See "Œuvre de Jean Goujon," Andot et Potier, Reveil, 2nd edition, Paris, 1868.

<sup>4</sup> In the "Mémoires inédits des Académiciens," i, 175-6, it is stated that Van Opstal not only made four allegorical figures inside the court, viz. La Chasse, La Volupté, l'Abondance, and La Liberalité, but that he also made figures of Force and Vigilance on





HOTEL CARNAVALET; RUE DE SAINT-GERMAIN, PARIS (P. 118)

SEE ALSO VOL. II, PP. 120-122



[K. P. 118]

FROM THE FRIEZE OF THE DE BREZI MONUMENT: ROUEN CATHEDRAL (P. 118)

in existence, and Blondel says that it was on account of their surpassing merit that François Mansart refrained from altering the front. In Blondel's work<sup>1</sup> the panels are shown in one drawing in their present position, in another on the side to the court. Blondel probably wrongly attributes to Goujon eight of the twelve figures of the Zodiac inside the court, which he says are "Chef-d'œuvres pour la touche, l'expression, et le choix des attitudes," but too big for their place. He also mentions that his uncle François had preserved the old part of the Porte St. Antoine in order to save Goujon's figures of a River and a Naiad, "figures d'une si parfaite beauté et d'une si belle expression qu'on ne saurait trop applaudir le goût exquis de cet architecte, qui, par ce trait de prudence, nous a transmis ce chef d'œuvre de l'art."

Goujon must also have been employed in the château of Ecouen before 1547. In that year a translation of Vitruvius by Jean Martin was published at Paris, with illustrations and an introduction by Goujon. Martin, in his dedication to Henri II, described Goujon as "naguères architecte à Monseigneur le Connétable, et maintenant l'un des vôtres," and it has been suggested that certain parts of the building, such as the fine dormers facing to the court and the entrance front now destroyed, were designed by Goujon, who in that case would have come in between Charles Billard and Jean Bullant. Goujon himself was very modest about his architectural attainments. He only called himself "studieux d'architecture," but there can be no doubt as to his consummate knowledge of architectural details. In his introduction he dwells on the necessity of a knowledge of geometry and perspective for the conduct of architecture and the understanding of Vitruvius, and says it was owing to the want of this knowledge that the work of "nos maîtres modernes" were so "démessurées et hors de toute symétrie." Jean Martin, who was a man of the world, would not have gone to an incapable man to illustrate the first introduction of Vitruvius to French readers, and it is evident that Goujon was regarded by his contemporaries as not less distinguished in architecture than he was in sculpture.<sup>2</sup> Such a man would have been invaluable to Lescot, and in all probability the details of the architecture of the Louvre and

the outside facing the Rue Ste Catherine, and a bas-relief of Peace, Abundance, and Prudence, with an "amour ou génie qui les Caresse," on the front to the Rue des Francs Bourgeois.

<sup>1</sup> "Architecture Française," ii, 148 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> In an epitome of Vitruvius by J. Gardet and Dominique Bertin, published at Toulouse in 1556, Goujon is called "sculpteur et architecte de grand bruit." Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," 86.

of the Fontaine des Innocents, if not the entire design, were supplied by Goujon. With De l'Orme his relations were probably the normal ones of architect and sculptor, except that, judging from the evidence, they were not particularly friendly. De l'Orme employed him at Anet, where Goujon executed the Fames in the pendentives of the dome of the chapel, and the figures of children carrying the emblems of the Passion on the soffits of the north and south arches. But his most famous work here was the group of Diana and the Stag, which once surmounted a fountain standing in the court to the left of the house as you entered, and next the tennis court. The figures and upper part of the pedestal are now in the Louvre. Some idea of Goujon's extraordinary accomplishment as a sculptor can be gained from this group, even in its present irrelevant setting. And in saying this, I am not referring only to the subtle fascination of the figure, so instinct with the classical feeling for beauty, and yet so absolutely modern and even French of that period in its charm, but to what I may call its architectural quality, the adjustment of the relations between the group and the outline of the sarcophagus on which it rests, the delicate surface relief in the architectural forms in subordination to the gracious modelling of the figure, and the sense of scale which controls the whole design. These are matters in which great sculptors have been known to fail. But Goujon's sense of the relation of sculpture and architecture was sure and unailing, and with him it was more than instinct. His training in architecture had doubled his equipment as a sculptor in so far as it held his art in equipoise, giving it a certain exquisite finesse, without running over into virtuosity, and that rhythmical harmony of composition which is an essential quality of all great sculpture. De l'Orme, however, constitutionally and by training, was unable to realize the value of this quality. In his multitudinous writings he never acknowledged Goujon's work at Anet, and I doubt if he appreciated the finer possibilities of monumental sculpture. When his chance of using it came with the tomb of François I, he was unequal to the occasion, for he filled the panels of his plinth with hundreds of tiny little figures by Pierre Bontemps, and seems to have missed the lesson of Goujon's splendid breadth of treatment.

After Anet Goujon devoted himself to the sculpture of the Louvre. He first appears in the *Comptes* at 1555-6 as "maistre Jean Goujon, sculpteur en pierres pour le Roy,"<sup>1</sup> when he receives 560 livres for works of sculpture. He appears again in 1558 still as "maistre." In

<sup>1</sup> *Comptes*, i, 261.



THE FOUNTAIN OF DIANA (P. 170)

FROM "JEAN GORDON," BY R. FETTER

By permission of Messrs. Duckworth and Co.





[Féret]

FIGURES FROM THE FONTAINE DES INNOCENTS (PP. 110, 121)

BY JEAN GOUJON





1560 he is described simply as "Jean Goujon, sculpteur."<sup>1</sup> In 1561 he is again "maistre" and receives 1,085 livres "pour ouvrages de son art." In September 1562 he receives payment of 716 livres for works that he has done and will do at the Louvre.<sup>2</sup> After that he disappears from the accounts and from France. Legends grew up of his having been murdered when at work on the Fontaine des Innocents, in the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and almost the memory of him was lost, in the early part of the last century.

M. Andot, writing before 1844, speaks of Goujon as having been forgotten in France for three centuries, which, by the way, was not the case, as Blondel mentioned him with full appreciation of his genius. Since that date the devoted care of French historians has placed Goujon on his proper pedestal, but it was not till 1884 that M. Sandonini discovered the entry in the registers of the Inquisition at Modena, proving that Goujon was at Bologna in 1563, and that he died there before 1568.<sup>3</sup> Some years ago I myself noted, on the south side of the Church of Saint Eufemia, at Verona, a large mural monument to Count Marco di Veritate, erected in 1566. The resemblance to Goujon's manner is most striking, and I believe that this may be added to the list of his works. Primaticcio is known to have visited Bologna towards the end of 1562. It is probable, as M. Sandonini suggested, that Goujon came with him, and through Primaticcio obtained introductions to Italian patrons, for, with all his faults of aggression and self-advertisement, Primaticcio was a generous and loyal friend of artists. At Bologna Goujon lodged with a certain Laurent Penis, a Frenchman and wood engraver, in the house of a widow on the Piazza of San Michele; and it appears from the deposition of Laurent Penis before the Inquisition in 1568, that he lived here with Frenchmen of the reformed religion till his death at some date previous to that year. What was the cause of his leaving Paris has not yet been discovered. Goujon, who was of the reformed religion, had already got into trouble at Etampes in 1555, when he was arrested, but let out on bail.<sup>4</sup> Had he turned on Lescot, and so lost his protection? or was it impossible for a man of his known opinions to remain in Paris?

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, ii, 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 65, "à Jean Goujon, sculpteur, sur ettantmoins des ouvrages de son art qu'il a fait et qu'il fera cy après, audit Château du Louvre, à lui ordonné par ledit seigneur de Clagny le 6<sup>e</sup> de Septembre, 1562, la somme de 716 livres."

<sup>3</sup> M. Sandonini's discovery was described in detail by de Montaiglon in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts," January 1885.

<sup>4</sup> Lemonnier, "Hist. de France," ed. Lavis, V, ii, 343.

The year 1562 had begun in a disastrous manner. On Sunday, 1st March, Guise's men had put to the sword a whole congregation of Protestants at Vassy.<sup>1</sup> There was a massacre of Huguenots at Sens in April, in July two hundred were killed or drowned in the river at Tours, and on 13th July all Protestants were put "hors la loi" by decree of Parliament, and "la Chasse aux Huguenots" became an organized sport in Maine and Anjou. The Huguenots did their best in reply, sacking churches and killing the priests, wearing their vestments as cloaks, melting the church plate into money and the church bells into cannon. The wonder is that the arts could live at all in these portentous times. A namesake of Jean Goujon was hanged at Troyes as a heretic in December 1562, and it is probable that he himself had to flee from France in fear of his life. Whatever the reason, his withdrawal was an irreparable loss to French art. Though skilful sculptors and ornamentalists were left, there was no one with his inimitable sense of style, no one to take up his untiring quest of beauty.

Goujon occupies a unique position in French art. There were clever and very dexterous sculptors, before and after him—Bontemps, Perret, Ponce, Cramoy, Pilon, and Prieur—but it is impossible to trace in their work the inspiration and the passion that burns in every piece of stone and marble that Goujon touched. He stood alone amidst that brilliant group as the man of ideas, and to him more than to any Frenchman of the sixteenth century belongs the credit of having stemmed the tide of ugly reaction that had all but stifled the innate genius of the French for sculpture. To realize what he did one must look back two hundred years, to the great days of mediaeval art, when that genius was vital and complete. The recovery of that lost spirit was Goujon's work in life. Consciously or unconsciously he was to rescue sculpture from the side-track into which it had been thrust by the Flemish and Burgundian imagers. He taught his countrymen that the function of sculpture is not didactic, or literary, or blood-curdling, but solely the search for and expression of beauty. He taught them, too, the inestimable lesson that sculpture and architecture must go hand in hand, each supplementing the limitations of the other, architecture giving the right environment to sculpture, sculpture giving full utterance to that which can only be hinted at by architecture.

<sup>1</sup> See Mariéjol, "Hist. de France," VI, i, 58, ed. Lavissee.





Springer. <sup>W.</sup> P. head <sup>W.</sup> 2. no  
sketch of figure with - Lion. N side  
of central dom. W. Ansona. New branch  
of Ansona. Humphead 1906. mutilated

 $\{K, K', \text{etc.}\}$ 

FIGURE OF SAMSON: AUNERRE CATHEDRAL (P. 124)

## CHAPTER VIII

### FRENCH SCULPTORS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

**H**ISTORICALLY it is hardly possible to treat the architecture of the reign of François I as anything but a series of experiments, and the clearest evidence of its immaturity is to be found in the severance of ornament from organic structure, and the inability of the artists of that time to treat the two in relation to each other.

The main idea of the ornamentalist was to cover every inch of surface with carving, without regard to the effect as a whole, and the result was that he stultified the architecture, and in scarcely any case attained to the level of serious sculpture. But the French instinct for lucidity and logical completeness did not long acquiesce in this chaotic jumble of the arts, and there is no more striking proof of the steady advance of French Renaissance, or Neo-Classic, architecture, than the intimate association between sculpture and architecture, which gives its peculiar quality to the art of the third quarter of the sixteenth century. Unfortunately, just as architectural sculpture was reaching its most perfect expression, the Valois dynasty was staggering to its end, and the wars of the Ligue came to paralyse the arts of France, and to arrest their further development. Many years of laborious endeavour were to follow before the arts were to recover from that *détente*.

French sculpture is an immense subject, second only in range of importance, if indeed it is so, to the history of Italian sculpture, and I can only hope to indicate quite generally the points at which it touches architecture in the particular period with which I am now dealing. Nor can I attempt here to deal with the forerunners of the Renaissance sculptors. Such well-known examples as the great king at Rheims, or the two figures of the Visitation at Rheims that suggest in their pose and drapery a reversion to the sculpture of Caesarian Rome, or the figures in the Sainte Chapelle at Paris, or that splendid Bishop of St. Leu d'Esserent, and countless other instances, of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries show that, from the earliest date, sculpture

and architecture were the natural expression of the French genius, and we may take as typical of the final phase of their art at its best, that wonderful little relief of Samson, from the west door<sup>1</sup> of the Cathedral at Auxerre. In that work there is no hesitation, no convention. The art is as flexible, as vital, as sensitive to the play of life and energy, as the art of Donatello. But art is so subtle and evanescent that just as it reaches its finest flower, the bloom is already fading. For reasons that are not very clear, the ungracious realism of the Flemings was already gaining the mastery over this beautiful art.

France as we now know it, a vast and compact territory, did not exist in the fifteenth century, and Burgundy, if not the strongest, was the wealthiest principality of north-western Europe. Burgundy inevitably drew its artists from the Flemings, whose industrious craftsmen had almost monopolized the trade of image-making. Beauneveu of Valenciennes was the principal "imager" of the fourteenth century; Jean of Cambrai, his pupil, made the tomb of the Duc de Berri at Bourges, in which indeed the recumbent figure of the Duke with the chained bear at his feet is admirable, but the characteristic imagination of the Fleming appears in "The Mourners," by Paul Mosselman, one of them being represented as holding his nose. Philip the Bold at Dijon summoned his artists from Flanders, Jacques de Baerze from Termonde, Claus Sluter, Broderlam the painter from Ypres, and others. Sluter, who died in 1404, was succeeded by his nephew Werwe, who died in 1439; these men formed that Burgundian school which more or less dominated all French sculpture of the fifteenth century. When in the early years of the sixteenth century Margaret of Austria built the memorial church of Brou with its monuments, she sent her sculptor from Malines. Throughout the latter part of the fifteenth century, Flemish art was supreme in north-west Europe. The Low Countries, Spain, and Burgundy, were in intimate touch, and from the seething cities of the Netherlands came these indomitable craftsmen ready to place their skill at the service of all who would pay for it. From Flanders they came to Dijon, to Bourg, to Toulouse in the west, to Innsbruck away to the east, and to Burgos in the south. France, the mistress of mediaeval art, was ringed in on all sides by a barrier of alien art, not less impenetrable than the mountains on her eastern frontier. It was not to be wondered at that her defences should have weakened, that she should have been powerless to prevent the art of the Primitives from paralysing the instinct for

<sup>1</sup> On the left-hand side as you enter the centre doorway. The figure, which is about 18 inches high, closely resembles in conception Leighton's statuette of "The Sluggard."

beauty, the sense of style, the lofty ideals of art which had come down to her through the ages as the heritage of the Latin race. In this art of the Flemings there is much technical ability, infinite ingenuity, here and there a certain homely pathos, and rugged strength of portraiture, as in the figure of Philip the Bold, kneeling grim and defiant in the entrance of the chapel of the Chartreuse at Dijon. But it is never at the highest level of the imagination. It is narrow in conception, destitute of any instinct for beauty, altogether the most depressing phase of art that has ever existed among the western races. Moses' Well at Dijon, the famous masterpiece of Claus Sluter, is simply ugly. These Flemings must have had a conception of beauty peculiar to themselves. One can find beauty, varying in its manner of expression, in all the art of the West—Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Roman, Mediaeval, Neo-Classic—but scarcely ever in the work of these earlier Flemings, these Primitives, with their thin, melancholy outlook on life, their inability to see beyond the minutiae of a crude and sordid realism.

The instinct to break loose from this art of the charnel-house must have been irresistible to the true French spirit, yet it could not have been attempted successfully without the impetus of the Italian invasion. A new starting-point was necessary, and it was the work of the Humanists to supply it, and of the Italian artists to render it concrete and intelligible to a people of fine natural genius who had lost their way in art. French writers, with pardonable patriotism, date the change earlier. M. Gonse, and even that careful scholar the late Anatole de Montaiglon, claim Michael Colombe as the protagonist of the French revolt. M. Gonse even went so far as to call him<sup>1</sup> "une des plus grandes figures artistiques de la France," he assigns to him and Jean Perréal the absolute direction of French art in the reigns of Charles VIII and Louis XII, and ranks him with Goujon, Coysevox, and Carpeaux. The claim is so far-reaching that it requires careful testing by what actually remains of this artist's work.

Colombe was born somewhere about 1430, either in Brittany or at Tours. He was at Dijon about 1445, and at Bourges in 1467, and no doubt came under the influence of the Burgundian school, but of his training and early work nothing is known. In 1480 he made a model for the tomb of Louis de Rohault, Bishop of Maillezaux,<sup>2</sup> a bas-relief of the death of the Virgin for the Church of St. Saturnin at Tours, where he spent most of his life, and a Holy Sepulchre for the Church of St.

<sup>1</sup> "La Sculpture Française," Louis Gonse, p. 45.

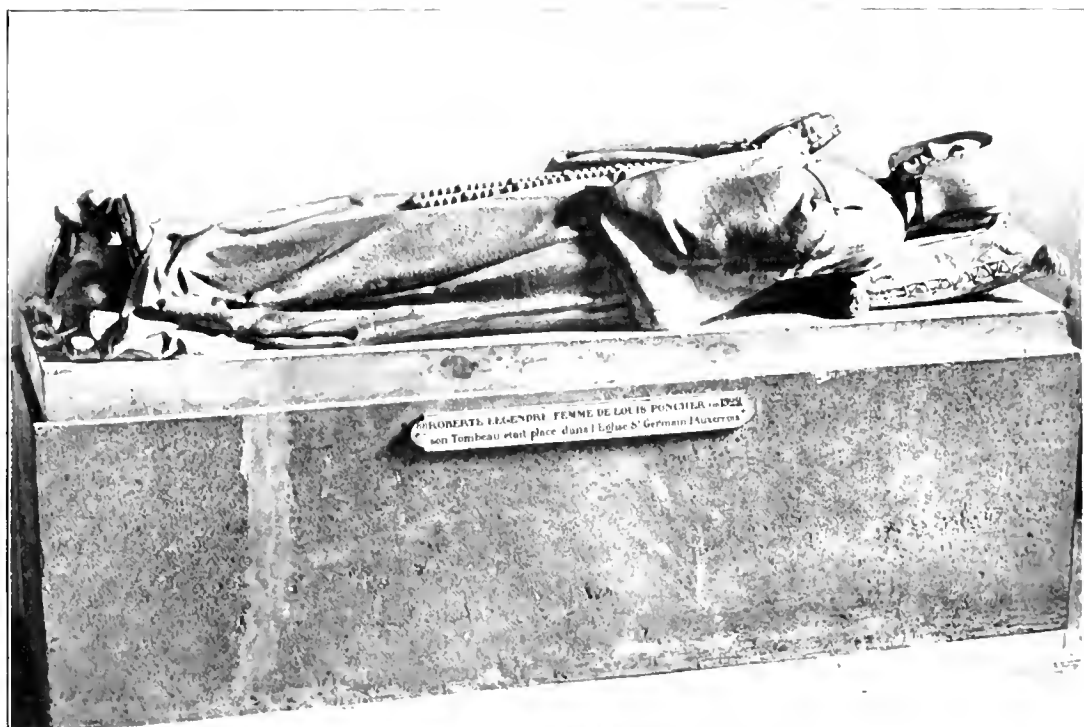
<sup>2</sup> Gonse, p. 46.

Sauveur at La Rochelle. The only other known works by Colombe are the monument to François II of Brittany at Nantes, the bas-relief of St. George for Gaillon,<sup>1</sup> and a project for the tomb of Philibert of Savoy at Brou which was never carried out. All three latter works were undertaken after 1500, when Colombe was a very old man. M. Gonse has argued from this that his previous life must have been very fully occupied; and, feeling the necessity of filling out his claim to first-rate eminence he has assigned to Colombe some remarkable works of unknown origin, certain statues of the Virgin in the district of Forez near Montbrison, the "Virgin of Olivet," now in the Louvre, and the recumbent figure of Roberte Legendre, wife of Louis Poncher, now in the Louvre. He further agrees with Palustre in assigning to Colombe the burial of Christ, in the church of Solesmes, and even hints at his having had something to do with the Amboise monument at Rouen. The worst of these enthusiastic writers on the art of their country is that they throw their nets so wide. If they cannot get their case on one count they try on another, forgetting that the pleas cancel each other. If Colombe was the sculptor of that beautiful and dignified figure of Roberte Legendre, it is difficult to see how he could have been the artist of the Virgin of Forez, still less of the stumpy and ignoble figures of the tomb of Solesmes, the most famous and most deplorable of those fifteenth to sixteenth-century Entombments, modelled and coloured with the crudest realism, which aimed at the merest theatrical effect. There are a large number of these Entombments still left in France. Much the finest technically is that in the Church of St. Maclou at Pontoise, where the figures are rather more than life-size, and very well executed. But here too there is no attempt at monumental grouping. Narrative and dramatic, or rather melodramatic effect, are all the artist's aim. The reliefs round the choir screen at Chartres show this sort of work at perhaps its best, the bas-relief of the Last Supper, and the repentance of Judas, in St. Jean at Troyes,<sup>2</sup> show it about at its worst. Roberte Legendre did not die till 1522, eight or ten years after the death of Colombe, and though of course the tomb may have been put up in the lady's lifetime, there appears to be no evidence that it was. A survey of the evidence and examination of authenticated work by Colombe tend to show that he must be classified with the fifteenth-century men, with the Burgundian school, and, in spite of the fact that he lived at Tours, not with

<sup>1</sup> Now in the Louvre.

<sup>2</sup> These were set in an altar, at the east end of St. Jean at Troyes by Girardon, and are attributed to Jacques Julyot. See below on the school of Troyes.





EFFIGY OF PORTIEE LEGENDRE IN THE FOULLE (P. 126)



TOMB OF FRANÇOIS II, DUKE OF BRITANY, NANTES CATHEDRAL (P. 127)



the group of sculptors,<sup>1</sup> the Justes, Jerome da Fiesole, and the Italians, who made that city the centre of the new movement in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

Colombe may have been an excellent sculptor in the older manner, but he failed where the Burgundian school always did fail, namely in unity of conception, and a sense of beauty. The famous tomb of François II, last Duke of Brittany (died 1488), in the south transept of the Cathedral at Nantes, is supposed to be his greatest work. It is a very big monument, the slab carrying the recumbent figures measuring 10 ft. by 5 ft., and the sides are covered with detail. But the artist took it into his head to put four large detached figures at the angles which take all the scale out of the sides, spoil the outline, and greatly interfere with the composition of the monument. This is generally attributed entirely to Colombe, but a careful examination on the spot convinces me that at least three men were at work here. First, the man who did the figures on the slab: these are very beautiful, designed without any affectation and perfect in execution, this man was an admirable artist, and if he were Michael Colombe, M. Gonse's eulogies do not overstate the case. But more probably the figures were by Jerome da Fiesole. Secondly, there was the man who did the four angle figures, the little figures in the niches, and the characteristic heads in the rounds, their heads and hands showing as mere specks of white in their black marble hoods. This man was clearly of the Burgundian school, and I suggest that he was Michel Colombe. Lastly, there was the ornamentalist who carved the delicate arabesques on the pilasters.<sup>2</sup> The relief of St. George and the Dragon, from Gaillon, by Colombe, is quite unconvincing. The action is dull, and wanting in vitality, and the modelling clumsy. It is not among the Burgundians, or the carvers of Troyes, or in Michael Colombe, that we shall find the motive power of that revolution in

<sup>1</sup> I should point out that M. Gonse, on p. 57 of his fine work on French sculpture, exactly reverses the rôles.

<sup>2</sup> Palustre, in an article on French sculptors of the Renaissance ("Gazette des Beaux Arts," 1884, second part, 406 and 525), says this tomb was destroyed by the Revolutionaries in 1792, and was put together again in 1817. According to Palustre, the main suggestion of the design came from Perréal, and the work was executed by Colombe, with his nephew Guillaume Reynault, "imager," and Jerome da Fiesole, and another Italian for the arabesques, the construction being carried out by Bastien François, Reynault's son-in-law. My observations suggest that Jerome da Fiesole executed the recumbent figures, and their supporting angels, the lion and the hound; Colombe and Reynault the angle figures, and figures at the sides. The dimensions are 3·90 mètres long, 2·53 mètres wide, and 2·27 mètres high. The slab, the plinth, upper and lower moldings, and the drapery on the roundels, are in black marble, all the rest in white marble.

sculpture which was to be one of the chief glories of French art of the sixteenth century.

French writers make constant reference to the "School of Troyes" in connection with the earlier period of the Renaissance in France, and MM. Koechlin and Vasselot have produced a very interesting and learned account of the Troyes sculptors, assigning them a prominent place in French art, claiming their work as essentially French in its inspiration, and attributing their decay and disappearance to the insidious Italian. That at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries Troyes was the centre of a most prolific group of imagers there can be no doubt. In spite of the fire of 1524 and the wreckage of the French Revolution there are still at Troyes, and in its neighbourhood, a considerable number of statues of the Virgin and the Saints, and various Entombments in the churches, and, though they are seldom in their original setting, it is possible to form a fairly accurate idea of the status and attainment of the artists of Troyes.<sup>1</sup> Scarcely a single one of these figures can be attributed with certainty to any individual artist; Koechlin and Vasselot have classified them by typical examples, such as the "atelier de la Sainte Marthe," and admit that, among the names they have collected, they cannot trace any artist of genius, or even the actual author of any individual work, and they freely acknowledge that the work of the Troyes School was unequal. Far ahead of the general average is that impressive figure of Sainte Marthe, in the Church of the Madeleine at Troyes,<sup>2</sup> so sensitive in its treatment, so pathetic in its suggestion of her who was cumbered with much serving. At a lower level than this are the various single figures of the Virgin and Child, some of which possess a certain dignity of a homely sort. Though many of these figures are feeble and intolerably sentimental and some are simply ridiculous, there is no doubt that the Troyes imagers could have turned out a Saint of more creditable quality than a modern architectural carver, but when they attempted figure composition they came hopelessly to grief. They fell into the vice inherent in the art of the Primitives (by which I mean the art directly inspired by the painters and imagers of the Low Countries), that of subordinating sculpture to narrative and other motives which

<sup>1</sup> See "La Sculpture à Troyes," Raymond Koechlin and Marquet de Vasselot. Probably all that are worth study are illustrated in MM. Koechlin and Vasselot's book. It appears that, after the French Revolution, any curé who wanted a figure for his church, took the nearest he could get from what was left by the Revolution.

<sup>2</sup> The figure, which is larger than usual with the Troyes imagers, stands in a shrine on a corbel formed on the west pier of the south transept.





FIGURE OF JUDITH: FROM THE  
HOTEL D'ECOVILLE, CAEN  
(P. 131)

[N. D. photo.]



1.



2.

[N. D. photo.]

PANELS: ST. JEAN, TROYES (P. 130)

- 1. THE REPENTANCE OF JUDAS.
- 2. CHRIST WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

have no relation to the essential purpose of sculpture, namely, the interpretation of beauty through plastic form. The whole series of entombments to which I have already referred, and to which I may add the well-known instances of the sepulchre of Chavoure, and those in the churches of St. Nizier at Troyes, and in the Abbey Church of Souvigny, exemplify to the full this injurious tendency. When the Greeks adorned the temples of their gods, their sculpture was penetrated with a transcendent sense of beauty. Though it is rather more difficult for us to get it into the right intellectual focus, the same high sense of the dignity of art appears in the sculpture of Chartres, of Bourges, of Rheims, of Notre Dame, but it is scarcely ever found in the work of this Flemish school. What can be more unworthy of its theme than the group of the Visitation in the Church of St. Jean at Troyes, those two unpleasant figures greeting one another in the market-place, each with a sly smile of intelligence, half friendly, half suspicious. No amount of ingenuity in the details of the hair or the borders of the dress will compensate for the fatal want of selection, for the failure to grasp anything but the most trivial and prosaic incidents of the subject.

But the Troyes school were responsible for worse than this. In the Church of St. Pantaléon is the well-known group of the arrest of St. Crispin and St. Crispinian by two soldiers in their workshop. The figures are coloured, and no effort spared to give the nearest possible resemblance to life. In other words, the treatment is crudely pictorial, and ignores all the conditions of monumental sculpture, in selecting the wrong moment of action, and presenting a group without any outline or mass worth considering.

Between the years 1535 and 1540 certain carvers and painters of Troyes wandered over to Fontainebleau in search of employment, and here they fell in with Dominique Florentin, who was at work as a painter and "imager," and whom Vasari describes as an excellent worker in stucco and an extraordinary draughtsman. Dominique returned with these men and spent the remainder of his life at Troyes. Though little is really known<sup>1</sup> of what he did here, it appears that he was greatly esteemed and largely employed, and there is no doubt that it was owing to his influence that the traditional manner of the old Troyes school of imagers was superseded by a feeble version of the Italian Renaissance. Dominique himself, whose manner shows a faint and very distant

<sup>1</sup> The figures of St. Jacques and of Charity, in the Church of St. Pantaléon, are almost certainly by him. Other attributions will be found in Koechlin and Vasselot.

reflection of Michael Angelo, was capable enough, but there was no one in Troyes to take up his lead, and the school ran itself out.

In the retable of the chapel behind the high altar of St. Jean are three panels of the Last Supper, the Washing of the Feet, and the Repentance of Judas, which are considered by Koechlin and Vasselot to be by Jacques Julyot, and by these writers and others to be the masterpieces of the Troyes school. If the merit of sculpture consists in ingenuity in carving, these reliefs must take a high place in the art, but if it consists in the translation of lofty conceptions into beautiful forms, the extraordinary vulgarity which asserts itself in every detail of these panels makes them, as I believe them to be, the last word of all that is detestable in sculpture. The school of Troyes had never been, in any sense at all, a considerable one. Even in mediaeval times Troyes does not seem to have possessed any first-rate men.<sup>1</sup> Then came the Flemish invasion of the art of Eastern France, and owing to local circumstances it took absolute possession of Troyes. For Troyes was a prosperous commercial city, its magnates were burgesses, not noblemen who had travelled: what they wanted was a bourgeois art, and they got it in full; an art that sometimes expressed emotion, but more often lapsed into sentimentality and even absolute bathos. Koechlin and Vasselot explain that this art was ruined by the Italians, but the school was never anything but a provincial affair. It was facile and prolific within very narrow limits. For a time Dominique lifted it out of the ruck, but when he was gone, there was no one to succeed him. Troyes was off the main track of the Renaissance, and the school died out not from the Italian influence, but from sheer inability to exist. It was not from such men as these that the awakening was to come. The suggestion of the first advance was to come from Italy; and the beautiful little tomb of the children of Charles VIII in the cathedral at Tours shows the vital difference between the perfect art of Italy and the mere craftsmanship of Burgundy. It was fortunate for France that, when the better way was shown them, there were men of genius in the country to follow it at once with all the enthusiasm of a new faith.

It has been necessary to give these details as to Colombe and the Troyes school because quite extravagant claims have been made on their behalf, and it is essential to clear the air of misconception as to the real sources from which such men as Goujon and his contemporaries drew their inspiration. If the view I have suggested is historically correct, their art is in no sense whatever the result and succession of the

<sup>1</sup> See the fourteenth-century figures of prophets in the Museum at Troyes.



work of the Franco-Flemish carvers of the fifteenth century. It is, on the contrary, a revolt against that influence, root and branch. It was an attempt, and an entirely successful attempt, to recover that vigorous and beautiful art, with its firm grasp of life, and its ever present sense of beauty, which was swept aside a hundred years before by the Flemish tradesmen. It is one of the most convincing proofs of the strength and vitality of French art, that it should have righted itself after that disastrous incursion. Goujon, Germain Pilon, Barthélemy Prieur, were not Italianized Frenchmen owing all their art to Italy, but true Frenchmen, who having mastered the idiom of Italy, used it for the expression of all that was most characteristic of their own nationality.

Few things are more remarkable than the apparently sudden arrival of these men, their more or less simultaneous emergence from the undistinguished horde of ornamentalists. Yet the attentive student will find evidence of abundant ability in the generation that preceded them, not only among the Italian immigrants, but in the work of Frenchmen. Though one may deplore their exuberance, there is no getting away from the amazing skill of the carvers of the Amboise monument, or of the figures struggling in the panels of the door of the south transept at Beauvais. The figures in the Hôtel d'Ecoville or Valois at Caen, or in the staircase at Blois, or the figure of a mother and two children in the niche at Castlenau (Berry), suggest what Goujon and Pilon were to do very much better a generation later. There must have been any amount of technical skill available. What was needed was direction, the guidance of master minds who should teach these clever craftsmen to eschew the puerilities of ornament and to treat sculpture as part of an organic whole with architecture and as the serious expression of large ideas. Apart from his individual greatness, the astonishing advance of Goujon consisted more particularly in his grasp of the relations of architecture and sculpture. The two arts were at last in touch with each other again. Instead of that divorce between building and ornament which I have noted as characteristic of the earlier days of the French Renaissance, we now find architects and sculptors working together, De l'Orme and Goujon at Anet, Goujon and Lescot in all his works, Goujon and Bullant at Ecouen, or Pilon and Roussel and half a dozen others, working on the tomb of Henri II under Primaticcio. The individual artist, working on his own and without regard to others, no longer exists. No such person was tolerated in the great days of mediaeval art, and he only appeared when architecture lost its control of

the arts. He now disappears for two centuries and we find sculptors working happily together on some great monumental scheme, submitting as a matter of course to the direction and restraint of some controlling mind. It appears from the *Comptes* that these excellent artists did not stand on their dignity as men of genius. They regarded themselves as skilled workmen doing definite work for definite pay. And so one finds in their work a certain assured *insouciance* which gave it a charm and vitality that to some extent compensate for its inferiority in feeling to great Italian sculpture.

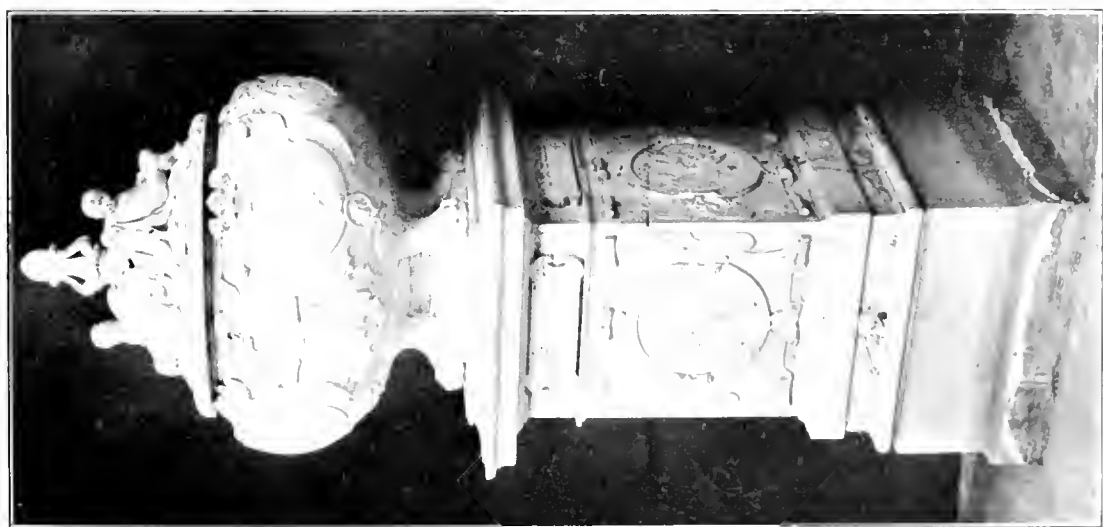
I do not attempt to deal in any detail with each of these men. Their work is described in Gonse's "French Sculpture," and there are examples of it in the Louvre, St. Denis, and the Museum of Comparative Sculpture at Paris, without going further afield. They are not by any means all on the same level. All of them were accomplished ornamentalists, there was hardly a detail of Renaissance decoration with which they were not familiar, but they varied greatly in their mastery of the figure, in their sense of scale and relief, and power of composition. In the possession of all these qualities Goujon was supreme, to a degree perhaps never since reached by any French sculptor. Such men as Pierre Bontemps, on the other hand, though excellent architectural sculptors, stand on a different plane, and seem to mark the transition point between the ornamentalist and the sculptor.

Bontemps first appears in the *Comptes*<sup>1</sup> in 1536, as working in stucco in the Queen's Chamber at Fontainebleau. He received the modest wages of fifteen livres a month, and the foreman of the men with whom he worked was Barthélemy de Myniato, painter, of Florence. He continued in the same employment till 1540, and was still at work here between 1540 and 1550, when he was paid at the rate of twenty livres for having made a wax model for the right foot of a figure of the Tiber to be cast in bronze, and for certain repairs to the face of a Laocoön in bronze, to one of the arms of an Apollo,<sup>2</sup> and to the figure of Vulcan which struck the hours in the great clock of Fontainebleau. In the year 1556 he received 135 livres for a statue in wood of François I, seven feet high, to stand in the hall of the palace;<sup>3</sup> 230 livres for the relief of the battle of Cerisolles in the plinth of the tomb of François I in St. Denis, and for the figures of the two eldest sons of the King; and 115 livres for a tomb "en forme de serlo-bastre de marbre," in the choir of the Church of the Abbey of Hautes

<sup>1</sup> *Comptes*, i, 100, 101; ii, 396; xv, 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 191, 195, 196, 203.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 292.

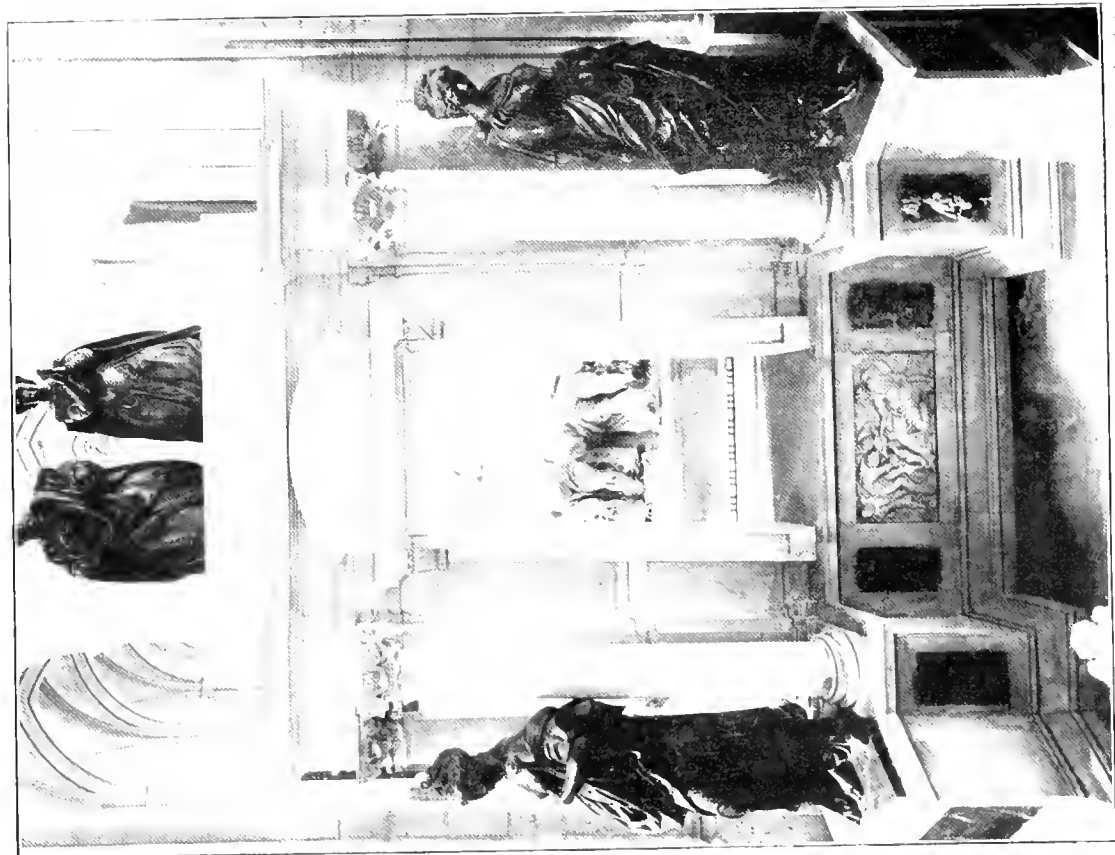


STATUE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT TO THE FOUNTAIN OF ST. PETER IN 1878

STATUE OF THE BELL-TOLENTINE







LA 2660

TOMB OF HENRI II: ST. DENIS (P. 135)  
(GERMAIN Pilon and others)



Photo 1

TOMB OF GUILLAUME DU BELLAY: LE MANS CATHEDRAL (P. 134)

Bruyères, "where is the heart of the late King Francis." I have no idea what a "serlo-bastre" is, neither probably had the clerk who so entered it in the accounts, but it is supposed to be the well-known urn now at St. Denis. Nothing more is known of Bontemps, and his fame has now to rest on the panels and the urn at St. Denis. Of his skill as an ornamentalist, the exquisitely delicate ornament on the urn and its pedestal is convincing proof, and the little figures of children on the top of the urn, and the figure reliefs on the panels, show that here, too, that is, in detail work, he was an excellent master.<sup>1</sup> But his failure as a sculptor of first-rate ability is equally evident in the panels of the tomb. Here, as his eulogist points out, are to be found the infantry, the cavalry, the artillery who figured in François' campaigns in Italy, their standards, their plumes, towns, landscapes, mountains, and valleys, every conceivable detail that the ingenious sculptor could think of. But what is the result on the design as a whole? Simply to weaken it where it should be strong, to distract attention from the main interest of the monument by this multitude of intricate little figures, to destroy, beyond redemption, the unity and the scale of the monument, making it, as indeed it is, an elaborate and ingenious farrago of architectural and sculptural details. Bontemps had learnt the art of delicate relief, but he still saw sculpture as painting, or as historiography, not as sculpture. He and others among his contemporaries failed to realize that a treatment which may be perfectly suitable in painting has to be reconsidered when it comes to sculpture. A fresh intellectual process is necessary, and the whole subject has to be recast before it can be translated into terms of the more abstract art. In other words, direct and prosaic realism is out of place in monumental sculpture. How Goujon rose superior to this low level of thought, I have already described. His

<sup>1</sup> The ridiculous finial to the urn is not original and was added by Viollet-le-duc. The heart which should have surmounted it got separated from it in 1795, and is now in the possession of a private collector (Gonse, 99). The history of this monument is still obscure. In the Comptes, ii, 120, Jerome della Robbia is paid for two children in white marble seated on a skull, holding "une trompe de renommée, à flamme de feu renversée, signifiant la vie extinct, contenant deux pieds ou environ de hault," for the tomb of the heart of the late King, and for carrying this with the tomb to Orléans. Apparently this work was rejected. The difficulty with nearly all these monuments is that they were knocked to pieces during the French Revolution, and though Lenoir did his best to save them, there is reason to suspect that when put together again, a good many were filled in according to the taste and knowledge of the architect in charge, if indeed the whole *mise en scène* was not altered. One would be tempted to wonder if the placing of the kneeling figures loose on the top of the monuments was part of the original design, were it not that they are so shown in seventeenth-century engravings.

attainments were among the most transcendent in the history of art in the sixteenth century.

Nor did Goujon stand by himself. Germain Pilon, if his inferior in imagination, was his equal in technique; and near to Pilon came Fremyn Roussel, who carved the bas-relief of Charity on the tomb of Henri II; and Barthélemy Prieur, Pilon's successor, the sculptor of that admirable figure of Marie de Barbançon Cany, now in the Louvre. And besides these men, to all of whom certain authentic works can be assigned, there are the unknown artists of those splendid portrait figures, such as those of Chabot,<sup>1</sup> Admiral of France, and Charles de Magny, Captain of the Guard, in the Louvre, or that of William du Bellay of Langeais in the Cathedral of Le Mans. No one knows who carved these figures, yet they are among the finest of their kind in France—so vigorous and dignified are they in their unaffected simplicity. Chabot died in 1543, and there is no doubt that the figure is of about this date. M. Gonse says that only two men were living at the time who could have carved the figure, Pierre Bontemps and Goujon, and not unnaturally prefers Goujon. Jean Just was also living at that date, though he was dead in 1549. Moreover, someone, it is not known who, unless it was Jean Juste, had already executed the magnificent figure of Georges d'Amboise the elder, in the Rouen monument, with its great sweep of cardinal's robes, and the obvious sincerity of its portraiture. The man who could do this could have done the Chabot, and the Du Bellay; Goujon may have been the artist, but there is no historical evidence to prove it. Du Bellay also died in 1543, but his monument was not put up till 1557. The resemblance of the treatment of the two figures is so remarkable that they are almost certainly by the same hand, as are the fine terminal figures flanking the tomb. The figure of Charles de Magny dates from 1556 and bears a strong family likeness to the other two figures. We have thus at least four figures of first-rate importance, the authorship of which is unknown.

Pilon was born at Paris in 1535. His earliest work was the eight figures of Fortune for the tomb of François I, each of white marble, two and a half feet high, in low relief. For this he contracted with De l'Orme for 1,100 livres, the marble being supplied by the King.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Félibien, "Entretiens," ed. 1725, II, 123, says that Jean Cousin was the artist "Comme il travaillait fort bien de Sculpture, il fit le tombeau de l'amiral Chabot qui est aux Célestins de Paris dans la Chapelle d'Orléans." It was, however, a fixed idea with Félibien that Jean Cousin was an artist of genius. Cousin's known work does not in the least substantiate Félibien's story.

<sup>2</sup> Comptes, i, 353, and ii, 4, 70, 129.



De l'Orme was dismissed on the death of Henri II, but Primaticcio, who succeeded him, saw the merit of the able young sculptor, and employed him at Fontainebleau in 1560 to make certain wooden figures of Mars, Mercury, Juno, and Venus for the Queen's garden.<sup>1</sup> In 1561 he received 200 livres for the three marble figures carrying the urn for the heart of Henri II generally known as the Three Graces. Models for this were also prepared by Jean Picart, Fremyn Roussel, and Dominique Florentin, who provided the pedestal.<sup>2</sup> In spite of its undoubted beauties, this work is not the most favourable example of Pilon's art: the figures are rather timid, the drapery is meaningless, and there appears, in an aggravated form, his habitual affectation of very long hands and feet. But it was good enough for Catherine de Médicis, and Pilon, under Primaticcio, was entrusted with the principal part of the monument to Henri II now in St. Denis. Catherine de Médicis, passionate as ever for building, intended this to be the principal feature in her project for the chapel of the Valois, and Pilon's work here is so fine that it challenges comparison even with that of Goujon himself. Unless it is Pilon's figure of the Cardinal René de Birague<sup>3</sup> (the Louvre), there is probably nothing finer in France in the way of portraiture than the kneeling figure of the King in bronze. The four bronze figures at the angles tell against the white marble columns in the most admirable manner, and here they form an integral and effective part of the design, instead of standing loose on the pavement, as in Colombe's monument at Nantes. A glance at De l'Orme's tomb of François I on the other side of the church will show how far ahead the younger generation had gone beyond the merely learned ingenuity of the architect. Not only is the tomb of Henri II superior in its play of mass and surface, the dignity of its figures and the large and noble manner of the panels on the plinth, but, one has to admit it, in architectural subtlety. The design is full of unusual refinements. There is a suggestion of Michael Angelo's design in the treatment of the openings and some reminiscence of Peruzzi's doorway at San Michele in Bosco at Bologna, or perhaps of a plate in

<sup>1</sup> Comptes, ii, 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 56.

<sup>3</sup> De Birague died in 1583, and the contract for his monument between Germain Pilon and the Cardinal's heirs was made in 1584. An account of it is given in "Germain Pilon et le Tombeau de Birague," by Louis Courajod, Paris, 1878. The monument, which must have been an exceedingly fine one, after various adventures was finally taken down at the Revolution, and found an asylum in Lenoir's Museum in the Rue des Petits-Augustins. All that now remains of it is the bronze figure in the Louvre. See also "Germain Pilon et les Monuments de la Chapelle de Birague," L. Courajod, Paris, 1885.

Serlio's "Architecture"<sup>1</sup> in the battering of the architrave. Had Pilon, too, been to Bologna? or is this the hand of Primaticcio? for it is quite different from the timid pedantry of Lescot, to whom it has been assigned. Félibien<sup>2</sup> says: "Après le mort de ce Prince (François II) il (*i.e.*, Primaticcio) commenca à S. Denis par l'ordre de Henri III et de la Reine Catherine la sepulture de Henri II ornée de statues et de bas-reliefs de bronze et de marbre, d'une si grande beauté, que si elle eut été finie, *comme il en avoit fait le dessein*, il n'y auroit rien de plus magnifique." This statement is somewhat discounted by the fact that Henri III did not come to the throne till after the death of Primaticcio. Vasari, however, in his account of Primaticcio, also assigned the design of the monument to that artist. Primaticcio, or the Abbé de Saint Martin, as he was called, was in general control of the work and certified for payments, and it is possible he made the design, for the monument was the work of several hands, and models were prepared by Dominique Florentin for the kneeling figures, and by Jerome della Robbia for the recumbent figure of the Queen. These, however, were rejected. Fremyn Roussel carried out the panels on the plinth, and Pilon, it is presumed, the four angle figures. Ponce Jacquiau made the models for the capitals, and certain figures in bronze, Laurens Regnaudin was employed for sculpture in white marble, and models in wax for bronze panels, and a certain Michael Gauthier, not otherwise heard of, for sculpture.<sup>3</sup> Payments were still being made to Pilon and Jacquiau in 1570, when the accounts end.

Pilon was now the leading sculptor in France, and was employed by Catherine to make a great altar-piece for the Chapel of the Valois, parts of which are now in the church of St. Paul and St. Louis in Paris, and the rest at the Louvre.<sup>4</sup> The subject of the altar-piece was Christ rising from the tomb, and it is characteristic of the confusion which resulted from some of Lenoir's well-meant efforts that the figures of the Roman soldiers which belonged to this altar were supposed to form part of the monument of Casimir, King of Poland, which stood in the Church of St. Germain-des-Prés, till the abbey was turned into a saltpetre factory at the Revolution. It was not till 1878 and 1881 that

<sup>1</sup> Serlio, iv, xxii (ed. Venice, 1551).

<sup>2</sup> "Entretiens," i, 294 (ed. 1725).

<sup>3</sup> Comptes, ii, 120.

<sup>4</sup> Gonse, 130, who mentions other well-known works by Pilon, such as the terra-cotta figure of the Virgin in the Louvre, a figure of St. Francis of Assisi in the Church of St. Jean and St. François in the Marais, the chimney-piece from Villeroy, a naked recumbent figure supposed to be Henri II, and other works.





1817.

VAULTING OF LA GROSSE HORLOGE; ROUFN (P. 138)

Louis Courajod identified these figures, together with a naked recumbent figure of Catherine de Médicis at the Ecole des Beaux Arts as having belonged to the Chapel of the Valois.<sup>1</sup> To this period, also, belong the admirable bust of Jean de Mouillins and those heads of Henri II, Charles IX, and Henri III, so eloquent of the predestined fall of the house of Valois. Pilon died in 1590,<sup>2</sup> when the tide was turning and the influence of Goujon was already forgotten. There is in the Louvre a very able but very unpleasant relief of the dead body of Valentine Balbiani, wife of the Chancellor René de Birague. There are signs here of a relapse to the ugly realism of the Burgundian school, of a preciosity of technique and indifference to beauty which were surely to set back the art of sculpture. Fine artist though he was, Pilon had not the passion for beauty which raised Goujon so far above his fellows.

In the political chaos of the last thirty years of the sixteenth century in France there seems to have been a sort of cataclysm of the arts. All that brilliant group of which Goujon and De l'Orme had been the foremost figures, had disappeared. Goujon had died in exile, De l'Orme in disgrace, Bullant and Lescot in comparative obscurity. The enterprises of Catherine de Médicis had ended in uniform disaster. There was nothing left in France to keep together the fine tradition built up by their labours and enthusiasm; not one strong man left to stem the receding tide. Such artists as remained seem to have lost touch of architecture, and specialized. Barthélemy Prieur, who succeeded Pilon as sculptor to the King, did some excellent work, but it must be ranked as pure sculpture. Others, such as Dupré and Frémy, specialized as medallists. Pierre Biard the elder, who made the jubé of St. Etienne du Mont at Paris, seems to have been wholly ignorant of the right relations of architecture and sculpture, and his work was a depressing relapse to the futilities of sixty years before. Even where the carver had the best models to follow he had lost the sense of scale. The figures by Paul Ponce in the panels and pediments of the upper storey of the Louvre are too big and out of scale with the architecture and with the figures that Goujon had carved below.

When things had come to this pass in Paris they were, as was to be expected, far worse in the provinces. The pendulum swung back

<sup>1</sup> See "Deux Epaves de la Chapelle Funéraire des Valois," by Louis Courajod, Paris, 1878, 1881.

<sup>2</sup> Palustre, "Gaz. des Beaux Arts," 1894, 2nd article. Pilon was married three times, and had six sons and nine daughters.

again for a time to the methods of the Burgundian school. Even at Rouen, where Goujon had begun his career, and where some trace of his influence might be expected, one finds in the sculpture in the vault of the Grosse Horloge the violent relief and pictorial methods of that school, and far away in the provinces it almost seems as if the work of Goujon and his contemporaries was unrecognized, even unknown.

All down the east side of France, from Nancy in Lorraine to Toulouse in the south, there flourished abundantly a school of sculpture which perpetuated the worst vices of the Burgundian school: men such as Ligier Richier in Lorraine, Sambin in Dijon, and the sculptors of Toulouse had perhaps never heard of Goujon, and were unconscious of the art of Italy. Mere technique, *tours de force* in realism and stone-cutting, indifferently covered a commonplace imagination. These men exemplify that deadly Teutonism which seems perennially to lurk in the background of modern art, ready to slip in on the first failure of genuine inspiration. Ligier Richier, who was born at the end of the fifteenth century and died about 1567, is typical of this pernicious tendency. The Entombment of the Church of St. Etienne at St. Michiel shows his extraordinary ability as a carver, and his purely pictorial method of treatment. In the figure of Philippa, Duchess of Gueldres, in the Church of the Cordeliers at Nancy, he formed the head and hands of white marble, the dress, hood, and pillow of a black marble, not unlike Bethersden. Direct and even hideous realism seems to have been his aim. Richier revelled in the details of the grave, and the figure of death that he made for the Church of St. Pierre at Bar-le-Duc is one of the most horrible things in the whole range of art. M. Gonse,<sup>1</sup> perhaps a little harshly, dismisses him as a second-rate artist and man, without originality, charm, or distinction of mind.

The same criticism applies to the sixteenth-century sculpture of Dijon. It is elaborate and overloaded, as in the example in the Rue des Forges. Hugues Sambin, to whom I have already referred, summed up its characteristics in his book of terminal figures (1572) designs of stupefying hideousness, more suggestive of the abominations of Hindu art than of the decent architecture of Western Europe. As for the Toulouse sculptors, they appear to have devoted their energies to the design of the most violent contortions, as, for example, the amazing figures that surround the windows in the courtyard of the Hôtel du

<sup>1</sup> Gonse, "Sculpture Française," 140: "un homme de reflet, il n'est ni imitateur, ni, à plus forte raison, fondateur d'école. Il n'a ni grace ni esprit."





HOTTE DE VILUX RAISIN: TOULOUSE (P. 139)

[R. B. de]



Vieux Raisin at Toulouse. One would hardly imagine such work possible after Goujon's Caryatides in the Louvre.

In all modern art there is a constant tendency to drop the standard, to depend on ingenuity of invention and technical skill rather than on the rarer flights of poetic imagination. Just now I called this tendency Teutonic, because in all the arts, not even now excepting music, it is characteristic of the art of Germany, in its intricacy, in its reliance on details, its failure in unity of conception and a sense of beauty, its instinct even for the *mesquineries* of art, as opposed to the clear vision, the high ideals, the passion for beauty, of the Latin races at their best. It was this tendency that reasserted itself in France in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. But after that date there was a relapse. The men of first-rate genius were gone, political conditions were too stormy for such men to find elbow-room, and so their tradition was dimmed and French art went seriously astray. When it recovered itself, in the following century, we shall find that from the point of view of decorative art architecture had advanced out of all ratio to sculpture, in the sense that the architects had arrived at a conception of architecture as something more than a mere puzzle box of the orders, whereas the sculptor had become careless of architecture, without material advance in technical ability. In following the path of their own individual development they forgot the once intimate relationship that had held the two arts together. The restraints of architecture which had been an essential element in Goujon's art became to them intolerable; and so began that tendency to specialize which ended by the architects devoting themselves more and more to the study of plan and abstract form, rendering them to this extent independent of their contemptuous brethren. The reaction was perhaps inevitable, for there can be no doubt at all that French sculpture in the sixteenth century had shot ahead of architecture;<sup>1</sup> and we shall never again in France find such architectural sculpture as the lions of the Carnavalet, or the Naiads of the Fontaine des Innocents.

<sup>1</sup> Blondel, ii, 1, 149, remarked on the great superiority of French sculpture of the sixteenth century over its architecture, "une architecture presque toujours p sante, des membres rustiques, des formes basses et  cras es."

## CHAPTER IX

### THE DU CERCEAU FAMILY

I HAVE already referred to the *détente*, the check that arrested the development of French art in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Nothing seemed to prosper in that country after the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The old generation had died out: Goujon first, De l'Orme in 1570, Primaticcio, his life-long rival, in the same year, and Lescot and Bullant in 1578. From that date to the end of the century France was no country for the arts, and in 1588 came the Nemesis of St. Bartholomew. In December of that year the Duc de Guise and his brother the Cardinal were murdered, a fortnight later Catherine de Médicis died bewildered and uncared for at Blois, and in the summer following (August 1589) the last of the Valois was assassinated by Jacques Clément. The tragedy was in full swing: there could be no place for literature and the arts until it was played to a finish. The arts in France were, in fact, in a state of suspended animation in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. There was neither money nor opportunity for their exercise, and the result was a perceptible slackening in the line of development.

Catherine de Médicis was to some extent responsible. She possessed to an unfortunate degree some of the worst qualities of her family, the habit of intrigue, of interference, of disregard of loyalty and fair dealing. Moreover, she laboured under the disadvantage of a great name. Because the Medici had been munificent and discerning patrons she felt that she too must play her part in the protection of the arts. She was obsessed by the mania for building prevalent in France in the earlier part of the century, and the worst of it was that her taste was extremely bad and extremely obstinate. Having little real insight into the arts, she insisted on interfering at all points in the design of her buildings, overrode the suggestions of her artists, and insisted on their carrying out her ignorant caprices. De l'Orme tells us that Catherine devised the plaques and patches of coloured stones and marbles at the Tuileries. She treated Bullant in much the same way at the Hôtel de Soissons.

Instead of giving these artists their head, she tied them down to her own paltry fancies. The narrowness of her outlook and her habit of constant and unnecessary interference were as disastrous to the arts as they were to the politics of France, and it is with a feeling of relief that we close the record of the doings of this most mischievous woman.

The wonder is that any tradition should have lasted at all through the chaos of the latter years of the sixteenth century. That it should have done so was largely due to the social habits of the artists of that time. In days when the guilds were still powerful and the free artist was regarded with disfavour, the practice of the arts tended to become a family matter; son succeeded father, and all sorts of collaterals were brought in to share the lucrative practice, so much so, indeed, that the guilds were becoming a scandal. They closed the doors to all but the sons and relations of their members, and though, as we shall see later, the guilds of artists were broken up by the Academies, the habit of artists and craftsmen keeping to themselves and intermarrying into each other's families continued in France well into the eighteenth century, so that a strong family connection was formed, and family traditions of art were perpetuated. Destailleur pointed out that before the French Revolution French artists had means of studying their art which are not to be found to-day. Apart from monuments and objects of art, now destroyed or dispersed, there existed many families of artists among whom there passed on from father to son not only precious traditions, but collections of drawings and books which permitted them to study past ages and perpetuate traditions.<sup>1</sup> Destailleur adds: "L'Ecole de David et de Percier rompit si brutalement avec les anciennes traditions Françaises, que les noms mêmes de la plupart des maîtres du XVIII<sup>me</sup> et du XVII<sup>me</sup> siècle tombèrent dans le plus profond oubli."

The Du Cerceau are a notable example of a family of artists. The most famous Du Cerceau belonged to the sixteenth century, but there seems to have been a Du Cerceau still at work in the eighteenth, designing arabesques and the like in the almost forgotten manner of his ancestor.<sup>2</sup>

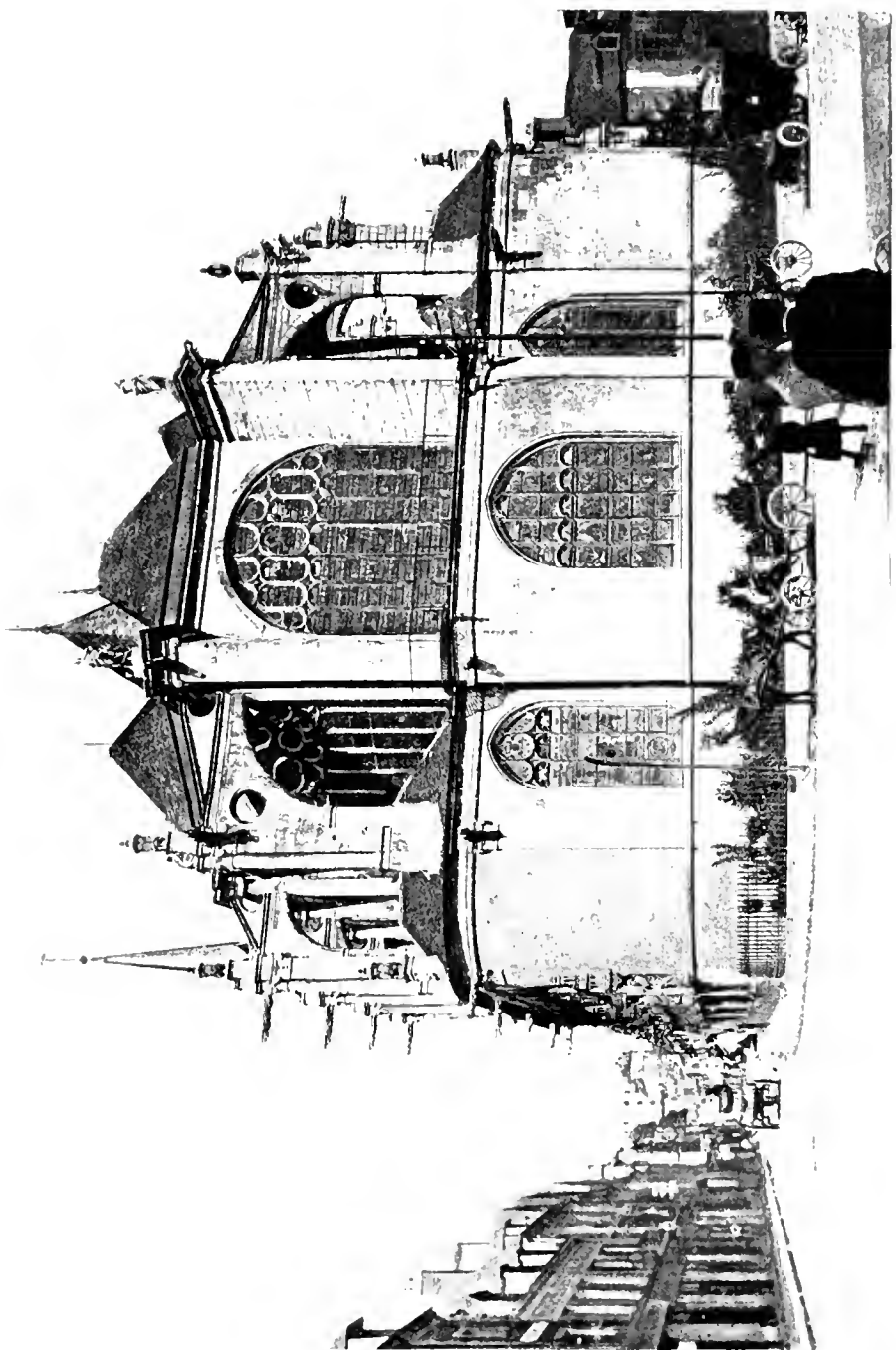
<sup>1</sup> H. Destailleur, "Notices sur quelques artistes français," Preface, p. vi.

<sup>2</sup> De Geymüller, "Les Du Cerceau," 316, says that Mariette, the engraver and printer, possessed the original plates of Du Cerceau's "Grotesques," and that these afterwards passed into the hands of Jombert, the famous publisher who in 1752 reprinted a number of the plates for his "Répertoire des Artistes." There was, however, an Androuet du Cerceau (Gabriel-Guillaume) who practised as an architect and draughtsman in the reign

The Du Cerceau family has been the subject of all sorts of legends and misrepresentation. At one time it was supposed that there was one artist only of the name, who, as Berty pointed out,<sup>1</sup> must have lived at least a hundred and fifty years to have built both the Pont Neuf and the Hôtel de Bretonvillers at Paris. The researches of French antiquaries, notably of De Geymüller, have cleared away much of the confusion and errors of earlier writers; but little is really known of the Du Cerceau apart from the multifarious engravings of Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, the founder of the family. Jacques Androuet, who took his further name of Du Cerceau from the sign of the hoop under which he worked at Orleans, was a native of Montargis, and is supposed to have been born between 1510 and 1515. The exact date is unknown, and is only inferred, partly from the date of his death, and partly from the dates of his supposed visit to Italy. D'Argenville stated that he was sent to Italy by Cardinal d'Armagnac, the Du Bellay who brought back De l'Orme from Italy, but the story is unsupported. De Geymüller, by an ingenious argument based on a careful collation of fourteen drawings at Munich with known drawings and engravings by Du Cerceau in France, proved to his own satisfaction that Du Cerceau must have been at Rome between the years 1531 and 1534. De Geymüller had unique opportunities of studying these drawings. Unfortunately he did not reproduce them in his monograph on the Du Cerceau, and we must take his conclusion largely on trust. But even accepting the visit to Italy as a fact, the critical argument which De Geymüller has founded on it seems to me to be erroneous and to misconceive Italian Renaissance architecture, and the relation of architecture to the arts. De Geymüller, taking the visit to Italy as an indisputable fact, regarded it as the key to the whole of Du Cerceau's career. He represents that artist as having steeped himself in classical architecture, and as having returned from Italy with the definite ambition to reorganize the art of France by instructing his countrymen in the technique of neo-classic, and so enabling them to dispense with the necessity of importing Italian artists. De Geymüller, "Les Du Cerceau," 34, says of Du Cerceau's projects: "Ces résolutions peuvent se résumer ainsi: Faire connaître à fond les formes et les principes de l'art Italien à tous ceux qui en France exerceraient des professions se rattachant aux Beaux arts et

of Louis XIV, and who died in 1743 (see Bauchal, "Nouveau Dict. des Architectes Français").

<sup>1</sup> Berty, "Les Grands Architectes," 91.



CHOIR OF THE CHURCH: MONTARGIS (P. 143)



aux arts industriels—comme l'on dirait de nos jours—et en second lieu affranchir sa patrie de la nécessité d'avoir recours aux artistes étrangers." There is no sort of evidence for this statement. If Du Cerceau went to Italy, and it is quite doubtful whether he did, he went there to gain what knowledge of art he could for his purposes as an architectural draughtsman, and with no such far-reaching ambition, as De Geymüller invented for him. That this was actually De l'Orme's ideal is proved by his own explicit statements, but it is the merest hypothesis to attribute the same intention to Du Cerceau. If Du Cerceau went to Italy, and if he returned with this resolution, he must have signally failed of his purpose, for whatever his merits as a draughtsman and engraver (and his merits are very great), it is clear that he had no sort of grasp of the meaning either of the antiquities of Rome or of the new methods of architectural design, introduced by Bramante, his contemporaries and successors. It is the old story of the ornamentalist and the architect, but I shall return to this later, in certain criticisms which I shall offer on Du Cerceau as a designer.

Du Cerceau is supposed to have returned from Italy about 1534, and to have settled at Montargis. Here he is said to have designed the choir of the church which was begun in 1545. The only authority for this attribution is a certain Guillaume Morin, a lawyer who wrote a history of the Gastinois, published at Paris in 1630. Morin's account is proved by the dates in the building to be inaccurate, but De Geymüller, following Berty, accepts his statements, and remarks on the resemblance of the choir of Montargis to the Church of St. Pierre at Tonnerre. There is no such resemblance, and I say this after studies of both churches on the spot. Indeed, Montargis is typical of the late Baron de Geymüller's methods. He studied documentary evidence with the most conscientious industry, but seems to have been quite at sea when he came to the critical study of the buildings themselves. The only trace of the new manner in the choir of Montargis is to be found on the exterior in the sections of the cornices and the engaged columns and pilasters of the buttresses. The windows throughout are of late Gothic tracery, and if Du Cerceau was so thoroughly steeped in Italian architecture as De Geymüller represents him, he certainly would not have been content with windows such as these, in what he would himself have called "the modern manner." Nor would he have been guilty of the ridiculous architectural blunders of the flying buttresses, the piers of which have Corinthian pilasters at the sides, half again as large as the engaged Corinthian columns on the face—and there is no attempt

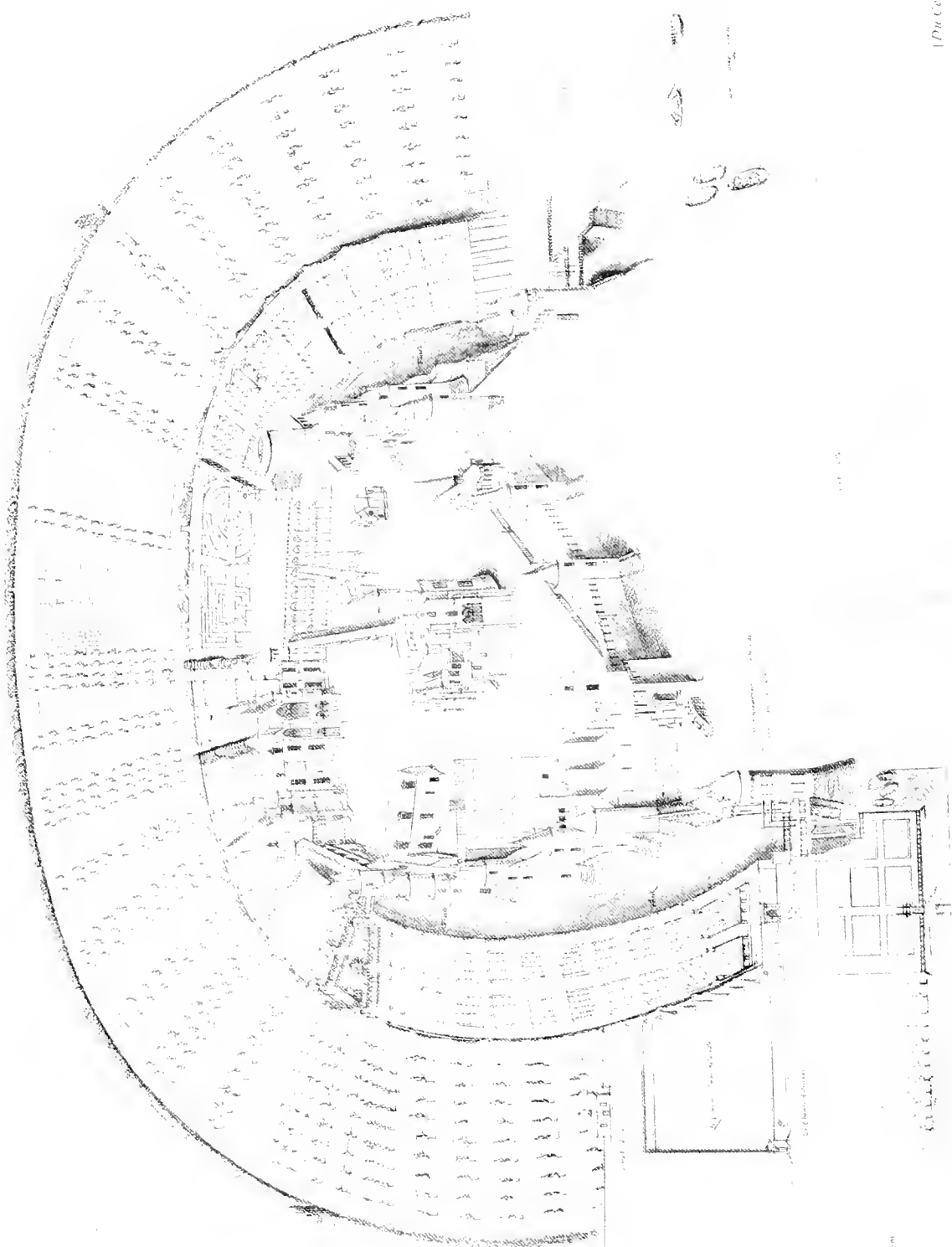
to make the various details work out correctly. The details are just what one would expect from a mason with a smattering of details which he did not in the least understand—all that is really good in the choir of Montargis is the very interesting late Gothic interior which does not show the slightest trace of the Renaissance.

In regard to St. Pierre at Tonnerre, although there are Renaissance details in the choir and transepts, there is a date, 1590, in the north transept, which places this part out of court in regard to Du Cerceau. Moreover, the remarkable plan of the choir and transepts of St. Pierre is quite different from that of the church of Montargis, and the only work at St. Pierre of the date 1541, to which De Geymüller refers, is the south porch, which resembles Italian detail prior to Bramante. It is certain that Du Cerceau had nothing to do with the church at Tonnerre, and highly improbable that he had anything to do with the church at Montargis. Nor is there any real authority or foundation for De Geymüller's speculation that Du Cerceau may have designed certain houses at Orleans. There can be no doubt that his time was fully taken up with his innumerable drawings and engravings, and that he made them the business of his life. It is not known when he left Montargis. In the preface to his book of Temples he refers to his workshop (*officina*), and it appears that somewhere before the middle of the sixteenth century he left Montargis, and established himself at the sign of the hoop at Orleans, and it was from this sign that he took the surname by which he is generally known.

The first work he is known to have published was his book of Arches ("Triumphal Arches"), issued in 1549. His book on Temples followed in 1550, and in the same year he published his book of "Grotesques" and "Fragments from the Antique." In 1551 appeared his "Compositions of Architecture" and his "Optical Views." He appears to have left Orleans between 1551 and 1559, as in the latter year his first "Book of Architecture" was published in Paris, followed by a second volume in 1561. Soon after this he appears to have lost most of his property in the first religious war, 1562-3. In the preface to the "Grotesques," dedicated to Renée of France, he says: "Lorsque j'estoye acheminé pour aller visiter les dicts bastiments et commencer ledit œuvre ('Les Plus Excellents Bastiments de France'), les misérables troubles survindrent en ce Royaume, qui me causèrent si grandes pertes et dommaiges, et à toute ma famille, que je ay n'ay depuis moyen, ni pouvoir de poursuivre mon desseing." Orleans was one of the towns taken by the Protestants, and was the headquarters of Coligny and







MONTARGIS (P. 146)

[Du Cerceau del.]

Condé, till the peace of Amboise in 1563, and it is probable that the workshop at the sign of the hoop was destroyed in the sack of Orleans in 1562. Du Cerceau appears to have been ruined, and to have taken refuge at Montargis with Renée of France, the widowed duchess of Ferrara.<sup>1</sup> It was probably with her help that he pursued his immense undertaking of illustrating all the great houses of France. The labour of measuring these buildings and drawing them on vellum with that exquisitely delicate line of his, of engraving them on copper, and arranging the details of their publication must have taxed his resources to the uttermost, and on more than one occasion he refers to the difficulty he had in finding money for the journeys that he made from house to house. The first volume of this book did not appear till 1576, the second following in 1579. The original intention had been to issue three volumes, the first dealing with the chief buildings of Paris, the second and third with the royal palaces and the more important private houses. Only the second and third volumes were completed. Paris was unsafe in those troublous times, and it must have been difficult to get about the country, or to obtain any help from the Court. Catherine de Médicis, to whom he had dedicated the second volume of his "*Plus Excellents Bastiments*" in the hope that he might spend the rest of his life in her service, had failed him, and Du Cerceau had to fall back on the stock drawings of his youth, for in 1583 he brought out at Paris his little treatise of the Five Orders, and in 1584 he dedicated his "*Edifices Antiques Romains*" to the Duc de Nemours, son-in-law of his old patroness, Renée of France. This was the last of his publications, and he is supposed to have died about 1585.

His industry and fertility of production were immense. Architectural details in every conceivable form, furniture, metal-work, arabesques, landscape and figure compositions, all came alike to his astonishing pencil. De Geymüller's elaborate bibliography of his productions<sup>2</sup> is convincing proof that here alone was the work of his lifetime. That learned writer, however, in his admiration for his hero, has claimed that Du Cerceau also practised as an architect, and that he, in fact, designed two enormous houses, Charleval for Charles IX, and Verneuil, first for M. de Boulainvilliers in 1565 and secondly for the Duc de Nemours (1568-75). He also claims that Du Cerceau not only carried out certain repairs at Montargis, but that he also designed the

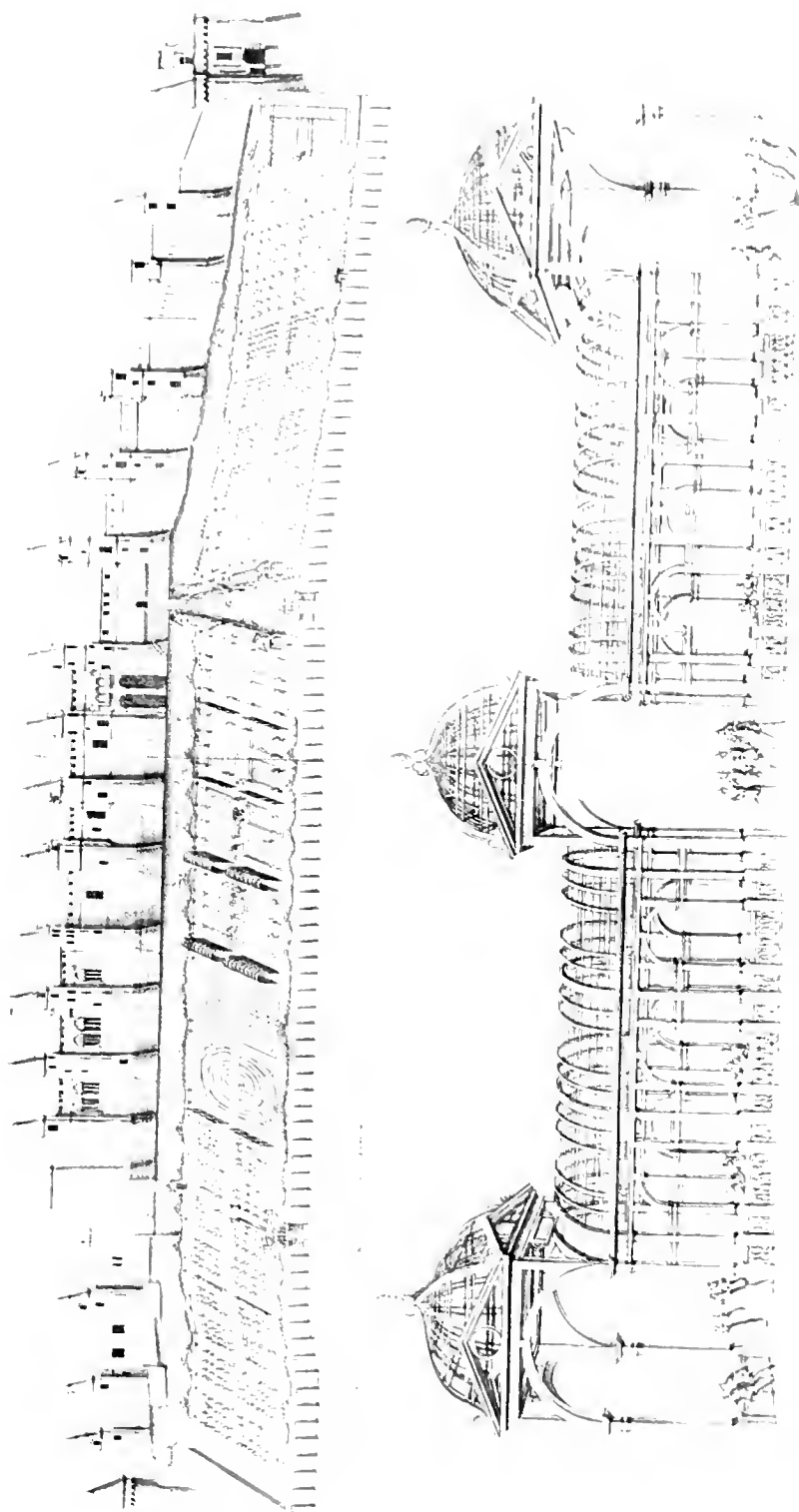
<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Louis XII, married to Hercules, Duke of Ferrara. On the death of the latter in 1560 she retired to Montargis, enlarged the house, and laid out the gardens.

<sup>2</sup> "*Les Du Cerceau*," 285-326.

famous "deambulationes ligneae horti quae nunc hederæ circumvestiuntur," the well-known "berceaux" or wooden arcaded walks with pavilions that once stood in the gardens of Montargis, and which are fully shown in Du Cerceau's "Les Plus Excellens Bastiments." Du Cerceau himself says that he looked after the repairs of Montargis, but it is evident from his own bird's-eye view of this castle, with its twenty-three towers, that he made no alteration to the building, and he says nothing about his having designed the berceaux. The very complete set of drawings and surveys of Montargis and the surrounding country, in the British Museum collection, probably represents the work that he did for the Duchess of Ferrara. Nothing remains of the castle of Montargis but part of the outer wall and the bases of one or two towers. The gardens and their "deambulationes ligneae" have long since disappeared.

In regard to Verneuil, De Geymüller claims the design for Du Cerceau on the ground that the drawings of this house are unusually complete, and that projects are found among his drawings which vary from the engraved plates. He argues from this and from the fact that in 1584 Du Cerceau dedicated a book to the Duc de Nemours, the owner of Verneuil, that Du Cerceau must have been the architect. It is known, however, that a certain Jehan de Brosse, "architecteur" (grandfather of Salomon), who had married a sister of Du Cerceau, came to live at Verneuil in 1568, the date of the second design for the house. The conclusion is surely obvious that De Brosse designed the house, and that Du Cerceau obtained his very complete knowledge of the designs and projects for Verneuil from his brother-in-law, the actual designer. In much the same way De Geymüller seeks to prove that Du Cerceau designed Charleval, founding his argument on certain similarities and differences between the engraved plates of Charleval, and certain of Du Cerceau's drawings. The only direct evidence is to be found in a list of pensionnaires of Henri III for 1577,<sup>1</sup> in which Jacques Androuet, architect, receives 200 livres, and Baptiste Androuet, "architecte à Charleval," receives the same pension which he used to have, namely 400 livres. The evidence seems conclusive that the son, Baptiste Androuet du Cerceau, was the architect of

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by De Geymüller, 99: "Jacques Androuet, dict Cerceau, architecte, 200 livres. Baptiste Androuet, dict Cerceau, architecte à Charleval, la mesme pension, qu'il y souloit avoir 400 livres." De Geymüller, by an extraordinary inversion, argues from this that Jacques Androuet was the architect of Charleval, or at any rate joint architect with his son Baptiste, but the entry expressly differentiates Baptiste as "architecte à Charleval." Moreover he receives twice the pay of his father.



THE CHATEAU OF MONTARGIS, AND ONE OF THE "BERGUEUX" (p. 140)



Charleval, and not the father, Jacques Androuet. On the whole, the arguments advanced to prove that Du Cerceau was an architect who designed buildings and superintended their execution seem to me to be gratuitous and unnecessary. The only contemporary, or nearly contemporary, evidence is a remark of the Duc de Nevers, that Baptiste was son of Du Cerceau, citizen of Montargis, "lequel a esté des plus grands architectes de nostre France." In a book on mathematical and mechanical instruments by Jacques Besson (Paris 1569) he is called "architecte du Roy et de Madame la Duchesse de Ferrare," and finally, some forty-five years after his death, Guillaume Morin refers to "Du Sersceau, l'un des plus ingénieux et excellens architectes de son temps." The term "architecte" was used so loosely in the sixteenth century that Du Cerceau's surveys of buildings and his innumerable published plates of architectural subjects would amply account for those references, and as Destailleur pointed out, his published works might have obtained for him the title of "architecte du Roi," "titre plus honorifique que réel, et qui se bornait à lui faire toucher une pension."<sup>1</sup> As against this, with the solitary exception of the repairs at Montargis, Du Cerceau nowhere refers in any of his descriptions to his having designed any of the buildings that he illustrated. Such determined modesty is inconceivable in the sixteenth century, more especially as Du Cerceau found it as necessary as the rest of his contemporaries to advertise his wares.

But his work as a draughtsman and engraver is incontestable and amazing; and if he did not succeed in educating his contemporaries in Italian architecture, he had a great, and indeed unfortunate, influence on French designers in nearly all the arts. His published plates of ornaments and furniture have been taken as typical of the art of the French Renaissance. Vast prices have been paid for examples which tallied with his engravings, and the study and attention which should have been concentrated on the serious work of the sixteenth century have been lavished on this third-rate art which had no merit but its very skilful execution.

There are three points of view from which Du Cerceau may be considered: (1) as an archaeologist; (2) as a designer; (3) as a draughtsman. As an archaeologist, always excepting his drawings of contemporary buildings, his work has little value. His warmest admirer has admitted that he improvised on his themes, that, for example, even supposing that he actually sat down to draw a building in Rome, he

<sup>1</sup> "Notices, etc.," 27.

allowed himself all sorts of licence in the result that he offered to the public. But how much of actual drawing and measurements on the spot he actually did is very doubtful. His favourite method appears to have been to make transcripts from other men's drawings, or to follow the rather common practice of antiquaries of the time of copying the representations of Roman buildings still to be found in reliefs and mural paintings, and producing these as authentic versions of ancient temples. For example, Du Cerceau presents one of the primitive projects for St. Peter's as a Temple of Ceres, Raphael's Palazzo del Aquila at Rome becomes the house of Tarquinius Superbus, and another design is used indifferently for the Temple of Solomon or for the Temple of Peace.<sup>1</sup> Du Cerceau knew his public. The enthusiasm of the French upper classes for the antique was immense and quite uncritical, and almost anything would do to satisfy the new fashion, anything with a specious appearance of learning, and sufficiently remote to be beyond the reach of the scholarship of the time. Palladio himself was a great offender in this doctoring of antiques. Even Serlio, a much more conscientious student, produced an astounding version of the great Pyramid and the Sphinx,<sup>2</sup> which he says was measured personally by Messer Marco Grimano, Patriarch of Aquileia. I do not suppose that these compositions were intentional frauds. It was rather that, in the wild rush for the antique, standards of historical criticism were swept aside, the scholarship of the time, profound as it was in regard to literature, was as yet incapable of dealing with points of archaeology, and the architect and the draughtsman, uneducated, uncritical, and anxious to please their public, had it all their own way.

The fact that Du Cerceau's drawings could be accepted show how imperfect, so far, was the appreciation of neo-classic in France. Unfortunately they were more intelligible to the layman than real ventures in scholarship, such as Marliani's "Topography of Rome."<sup>3</sup> Philander's edition of Vitruvius<sup>4</sup> was in Latin, Serlio's works were in Italian. On the other hand, Du Perac's "Antiquities of Rome"<sup>5</sup> were free-hand sketches and had not the semblance of scholarship of Du Cerceau's drawings. The result was that the latter held the field, and the French amateur of the sixteenth century lived in a merely arbitrary and fictitious world of ancient architecture.

<sup>1</sup> De Geymüller, 35.

<sup>2</sup> Serlio, Bk. III, p. xciii (ed. 1550).

<sup>3</sup> Dedicated in 1520 to François I and edited by Rabelais in the Lyons edition of 1534.

<sup>4</sup> Issued at Paris, 1545, and Lyons, 1552.

<sup>5</sup> 1575.



The same criticism, to some extent, applies to Du Cerceau's work as a designer. Du Cerceau designed with extraordinary freedom grotesques and arabesques, jewellery, gold- and silversmith's work, furniture, details of architecture, and every kind of decoration, and besides these, figure subjects, drawn indifferently from the Christian religion and Pagan mythology. Many of these designs are able, but they are open to criticism on two grounds. In the first place, they purport to be in the manner of the antique, when as a matter of fact, with the exception of the profiles of the mouldings, they have little or no relationship to the work of either the Greeks or the Romans; in the second place they are devoid of architectural sense. An architect designs in logical progression;—starting with his initial conception, his aim is to work that out into an organic scheme, in which each part is in intimate relation with every other part, none is superfluous, none is wanting to the full realization of his idea. When he designs a detail, it is for a specific place and purpose, and such a detail, removed from its setting and environment, would lose half its meaning. Du Cerceau's designs seem to have no limit or control beyond the sweep of the draughtsman's pencil. There is no particular reason for the architectural details, no compelling cause for the ornament. It might be what it is, or it might be something else, for in fact it is all in the air, the capricious fancy of the ornamentalist. Some of the most elaborate and the most unreasonable features of French furniture and decoration of the latter part of the sixteenth century are probably due to Du Cerceau's engraved designs. That furniture is often a marvel of cabinet-making and of minute and elaborate ornament, but it is unreasonable, never considered from the point of view of use on the one hand, or of large decoration on the other. The architectural sense is conspicuously absent, for Du Cerceau learnt his design in a bad school; his art was only a reflection of the Italian Renaissance, dimly transmitted through Giulio Romano and Primaticcio, and imperfectly understood.

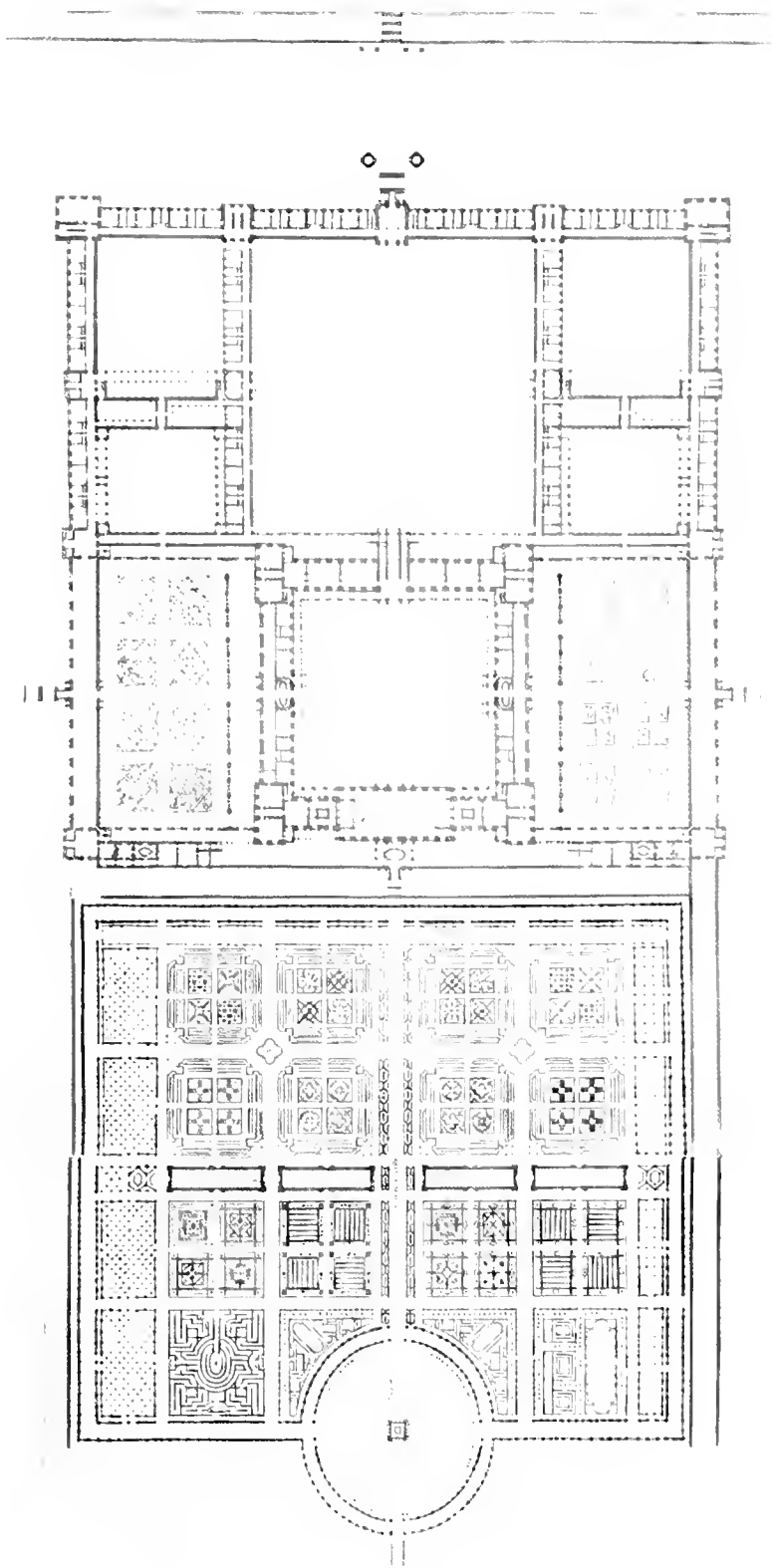
The real greatness of Du Cerceau is to be found in his work as an architectural draughtsman and engraver; and it seems from his own account that he so conceived of himself. He made his appeal to "all those who are curious of antiquity, and still more to those who are masters of architecture, who will find in this book [*Edifices Antiques Romains*"] several beautiful features and enrichments to help their inventions." His *Plus Excellens Bastiments* was to be "for the great pleasure and delectation of all great seigneurs and lovers of the art of architecture." Perhaps within his own limits there has

never been a better architectural draughtsman than Du Cerceau, in regard to scientific accuracy of statement and exquisite command of line for that limited purpose. The splendid drawings in the British Museum show his ability,<sup>1</sup> and what De Geymüller calls his astonishing "netteté du dessin." He was not a great imaginative draughtsman, such as Piranesi, but he brought to architectural drawing his own peculiar gift of perfect mechanical technique, and simply revolutionized its methods. The Italians, Serlio, Palladio, and the illustrators of Vitruvius, had been content with rough though very suggestive woodcuts; they made no effort at accuracy—boldly-drawn diagrams, sufficient to indicate the drift of the text, were all that they attempted. Du Cerceau, with all the Frenchman's instinct for the complete presentation of his case, was not content with this. When he set himself to depict the principal buildings of his time in France, he made full detail surveys of the buildings on the spot, and employed all the resources of his draughtsmanship to set them out with rigorous and unsparing accuracy. Du Cerceau's real *métier* was that of an architectural draughtsman or surveyor, that is, of a man who placed on record completed buildings, and in this he was supreme. A comparison of the drawings that he made for this purpose with the collection of Thorpe's drawings in the Soane Museum will show the immense superiority of Du Cerceau's work. His two volumes of the most excellent buildings in France remain his invaluable achievement. They alone are sufficient to support the great, if somewhat uncritical, esteem for this singular and laborious artist. Du Cerceau was the forerunner of Marot, of Sylvestre, and Perelle on the one hand, and of Lepautre, Marot the younger, and Meissonnier on the other—men who built up the great tradition of French architectural draughtsmanship, a method so remote from the fiery line of Piranesi, and yet so splendid in its precision and logical completeness.

The conclusion I have arrived at differs from that of De Geymüller, who, as the result of a minute and enthusiastic study of Du Cerceau's work, pronounced him to be "one of the greatest architects of his time in France." As I have already suggested, the documentary

<sup>1</sup> These drawings, in ink and wash, on fine vellum, 2 ft. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. by 1 ft. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  in., are contained in eight great boxes in the British Museum. They were brought to England at the time of the French Revolution, but nobody knows where they came from, or how they got into the collection of George III. Several of these have been well reproduced in "French Gardens and Châteaux of the Sixteenth Century," W. H. Ward (Batsford and Co., 1909).





PLAN OF CHARLEVAL (P. 152)

evidence for his architectural work is very scanty, and open to suspicion on the ground of possible confusion between Du Cerceau and his descendants. The internal evidence of his published designs, on which De Geymüller relies with such confidence, produces in the mind of an architect the exactly opposite impression. De Geymüller says of his work "*toute la Renaissance est là.*" Speaking as an architect, I should say that all the Renaissance is there except its architecture. Du Cerceau, in common with all the ornamentalists of his time, missed the real drift of the architecture of the Renaissance. All students will gratefully acknowledge the labours of Henri de Geymüller, but he was not an architect, and it is impossible to accept the dicta on architecture of a writer who sums up the spirit of the French Renaissance of the time of François I in the phrase "*pensées françaises, exprimées en dialecte milanais.*" Where is the Milanese in the roofs of Chambord, or in the stones and flints of the Manoir d'Ango?

Of Du Cerceau's family as little is really known as of Du Cerceau himself. One of his sons, Baptiste Androuet du Cerceau, was certainly a distinguished architect, others of his descendants practised the art with more or less success, and as constantly happened in this and the two following centuries a strong architectural connection was established in the family. The Metezeau, the Mansarts, the Blondels and Gabriels are well-known examples, and this habit of hereditary practice materially strengthened the tradition of architecture in France. Small variations and refinements on familiar motives, which are easily traceable in the work of successive generations, established what one may call a custom of design, such as had not existed in France since the fifteenth century. The result was a certainty and precision of technique, not only in the design, but in the details of its execution such as it is hopeless to expect when the architect is uncertain how to set about his design, and the workmen are ignorant of the details which they are called on to execute from geometrical drawings.

Two of Du Cerceau's four sons<sup>1</sup> were architects, Baptiste, the eldest, supposed to have been born between 1544 and 1547, who died in 1590; and Jacques, who in 1577 entered the service of the Duc d'Alençon, as valet de chambre, and afterwards became architect to the King and designed some important buildings. Jacques belongs to the period of Henri IV. Baptiste du Cerceau, and Jehan de Brosse, are really the last of the Valois architects, and belong to the old

<sup>1</sup> For the genealogy of the family of Androuet du Cerceau see De Geymüller, 280, 281.

regime. Baptiste du Cerceau is first heard of in the list of payments of the pensionnaires of Henri III already referred to, in which he is described as "architecte à Charleval." The Duc de Nevers, writing a few years later, with a ducal disregard of punctilious accuracy, describes how in the year 1575, when Henri III established his famous forty-five guardsmen, he took into his service "un certain petit architecte nommé du Cerceau," because "le petit homme" was the best draughtsman in France, was diligent, active, and attentive to his commands, and because the Court designer, De Magny, knew nothing about architecture. Henri III did not know that Du Cerceau was a Huguenot, but, says Nevers, probably confusing the son with the father, Du Cerceau did ample penitence, in that he made more drawings of monasteries, churches, chapels, and altars than any other architect in France had done in fifty years.<sup>1</sup> In 1585 he was "ordonnateur général" of the royal buildings, and said to be in receipt of the very large salary of 6,000 livres a year, but in that year he gave up everything "sooner than return to the Mass." It is possible that he recovered his position on the death of Henri III, but can only have held it a very short time as he died before September 1590, when he was succeeded by Pierre Biard.<sup>2</sup> Baptiste du Cerceau's principal works were Charleval and the first part of the Pont Neuf at Paris.

Charleval was begun for Charles IX on a commanding site near Fleury in Normandy. Du Cerceau the father, who illustrates it very fully<sup>3</sup> in the second volume of his "Les Plus Excellents Bastiments," says that if the house had been completed it would have been the finest building in France. Only the ground floor of the base-court was completed, but the whole conception was on an immense scale. The façade of the entrance front measures on Du Cerceau's drawing 1,050 ft.<sup>4</sup> After passing through the entrance the visitor found himself in a great base-court 450 ft. square, with smaller courts separated by ranges of buildings to right and left. The base-court itself was designed in the most exuberant manner, and Du Cerceau<sup>5</sup> shows a

<sup>1</sup> De Geymüller, 246.

<sup>2</sup> M. Guiffry, "Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris," 1881, 102, quoted by De Geymüller, 250.

<sup>3</sup> There are five plates in "Les Plus Excellents Bastiments," a plan, an elevation of the base-court as begun, and three alternative designs for the façade of the base-court.

<sup>4</sup> British Museum, V, 75, 76. The particulars in the text are taken from Du Cerceau's drawings. The house was never completed.

<sup>5</sup> Viollet le Duc thought this a design of considerable merit. It is impossible to identify it on the plan.







deplorably vulgar design for one of the façades to the court, which he describes as having been actually begun. Beyond the base-court was the main building, a great square edifice with pavilions at the angles, built round an open court 270 ft. square. A colonnade was to run round the sides of the court. In the centres of the two sides were to be staircases, with semicircular ends and a passage passing through the centre to long galleries facing the side gardens. On the further side of the court was the great hall 150 ft. by 66 ft. with two rows of pairs of columns down the length. A double horse-shoe stairs led down to the gardens. These were laid out in regular compartments, a broad walk ran down the centre, opening on to an oval plot,<sup>1</sup> 270 ft. on its main axis, called on the plan "théâtre." The only portions carried out were the gardens, a small temporary building for the King to stay in when he visited the work, and part of the base-court. Charleval was a notable effort, on account of its immense scale and the attractive and absolutely symmetrical plan. The great rectangle occupied by the house with its court and gardens measures on the plans about 1,950 ft. by 1,050 ft. But with all the other royal palaces on his hands the King could never have completed this reckless enterprise, and it is doubtful whether the works were continued after the death of Charles IX in 1574.

The only other known work of Baptiste du Cerceau was the Pont Neuf at Paris, begun in 1578, and not completed at the time of his death in 1590. The account of the procedure in the building of the bridge is suggestive.<sup>2</sup> It appears that when the bridge was first discussed, in 1577, various projects were submitted to Henri III. When the King had selected a scheme the details were worked out by the King's architect, a Commission of eminent persons was appointed to deal with the expenditure, and this Commission in its turn appointed a committee of experts "pour avoir l'œil, soing, et regard à la structure et bastiments," etc., in other words, to watch and control both the architect and the contractor. Lescot was a member of this Board, and afterwards Bullant. Lescot asked for further particulars, but died before they reached him; as for Bullant, he kept the Board waiting for three hours and never turned up at all, and it appears that the experts finally resolved themselves into a Board of builders, among whom appear

<sup>1</sup> Du Cerceau calls it oval, but in the British Museum drawing it is nearly circular. Du Cerceau says that the circular space at the end of the gardens was to be the centre of the garden scheme, but this is not so shown on his plan.

<sup>2</sup> See De Lasteyrie's "Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris," 1882, iv, 1-94; and De Geymüller, 250-267.

the familiar names of Chambiges, and Guillaume Marchand, who ultimately carried out a considerable part of the work.<sup>1</sup>

The work of Baptiste's brother Jacques and his nephew, Salomon de Brosse, belongs to the reign of Henri IV, and the last important effort of the sixteenth century in France was the prodigious design of Verneuil, near Senlis, begun about 1570, and now in ruins. As I have already pointed out, the evidence tends to show that this house was designed not by Du Cerceau the engraver, but by Jehan de Brosse, who married his sister. In the British Museum collection there are six very fine drawings of Verneuil by Du Cerceau, who illustrated it more fully than any other building of its kind, in the first volume of his "*Les Plus Excellents Bastiments.*" He there says that there was a good old castle at Verneuil, but that Philippe de Boulainvilliers "*homme fort amateur de l'architecture*" desired to have a building altogether out of the common, and accordingly had designs prepared of a quadrangular court 180 ft. square, surrounded by four blocks of buildings, "*suivant l'art d'architecture*" in a manner which Du Cerceau pronounced unique. It was to have "the four monarchies" in figures of stone placed round the court. In the British Museum collection<sup>2</sup> there is a drawing of the six Assyrian kings which were to stand in niches in the gallery on the first floor. A note says these figures were seven feet high, and standing as they did loose in their niches they must have been quite out of scale with the caryatides of the central bay which are shown about 13 ft. high. The bird's-eye view<sup>3</sup> shows the old house standing away to the right, the new with its series of terraces being quite independent of it, an innovation on the almost invariable practice, so far, of altering and adding to existing houses.

Verneuil was certainly a remarkable design. Two plans were prepared for it, the first for De Boulainvilliers, the second for the Duc de

<sup>1</sup> Marchand, who was described in his epitaph as an architect, appears to have completed the bridge after Du Cerceau's death, together with the Samaritaine, a building containing pumping machinery, which stood to the west of the north end of the bridge, and was so named from figures of Christ and the woman of Samaria in the frontispiece in the centre, the originals of which were modelled by Germain Pilon. Views of the Pont Neuf were published by Mariette (the elder) about 1688, from which the above particulars are drawn. The description on the plate says the bridge was finished in 1604 "*sur le dessein et par la conduite de Guillaume Marchand, célèbre architecte.*" In a view of the Château Neuf of St. Germain-en-Laye, of the same date, Marchand is said to have designed the two courts of a "*rustic ordonnance*" on either side of the original building by Philibert de l'Orme.

<sup>2</sup> III, 45, 46.

<sup>3</sup> British Museum, III, 41.

Nemours, who bought the property from De Boulainvilliers, apparently soon after the works had been started. The house was raised on a "fausse-braye" or platform, with heart-shaped bastions at the angles, thirty-six feet above the bottom of the dry moat which surrounded it. The level of the inner court was two feet above this platform. On the side opposite the entrance was a two-way staircase with a passage under, leading out on to a terrace on the garden side. In the design prepared for Nemours this side of the building was altered. The staircase and the angle pavilions were to be rebuilt, and the garden façade was to be doubled by the addition of a hall or gallery which Du Cerceau (apparently including the end pavilions) describes as 180 ft. by 30 ft. It is not clear how much of this was carried out. Du Cerceau's bird's-eye view shows the original design, in which a passage way led out under the stairs to a terrace in the front shaped as a semicircle with square three-storey pavilions at the advanced ends. The floor of this semicircular space was nine feet above the gardens. The garden again fell away from this, and descended by terraces to a water-garden at the lower end, laid out as alleys, covered with wooden trellis or berceaux, and adorned on either side with figures of rustic gods.

The details of Verneuil are unattractive. In Du Cerceau's drawings the elevations are covered with ornament. Monstrous Persians, apparently some twenty feet high, were to flank the doorway to the semicircular terrace, crouching figures, half-Satyrs, half-bats, were to surmount the pairs of columns. The entrance pavilion had a dome broken into by pediments of the most barbarous description. Everywhere we trace the exuberant facility of the draughtsman, that absence of any sense of balance, mass, and outline, which makes French neo-classic of the last quarter of the sixteenth century such depressing stuff. It is only a degree better than our own Elizabethan. The worst faults of De l'Orme are found in grossly exaggerated form in these drawings of Verneuil, for Bullant's influence had not yet had time to tell. The details of Verneuil are merely a collection of half-remembered and wholly misunderstood impressions of the Italian Renaissance, and it is only in its planning, in its conception of a great scheme for house and grounds, that one can detect some latent possibility of nobler design. Architecture after the brilliant advance made by De l'Orme and his contemporaries had again got off the track, and as yet there was no solid tradition to keep it straight. For the sixteenth century was a period of experiment in France quite as much as it was in England, and though individuals might reach a high degree of attain-

ment, yet architecture was liable to chronic relapses, and so far all that one can look for is evidence of a slowly dawning sense of composition, often obscured and retarded by imperfect powers of expression. The Du Cerceau family are typical of this stage, both in their accomplishment and in their failures, in their facility of ornament, and in their merely amateur conception of architectural design. There are periods of depression in the history of the arts, when the whole standard of attainment is lowered. Such were the last thirty years of the sixteenth century. Political and social changes may help or delay the next turn of the wheel, but the true revival will only come with the rise of some artist of commanding genius. French neo-classic architecture will have to wait for François Mansart before it will emerge in full maturity.

SAPES NANCINI SVPERMACADINTIS

REVERENDISSIMO



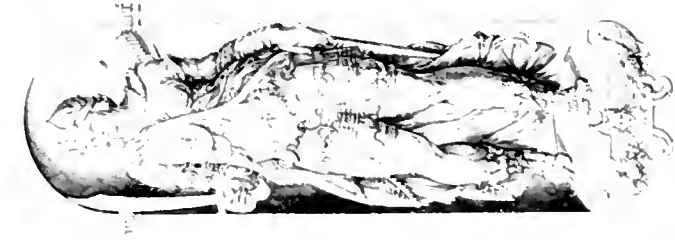
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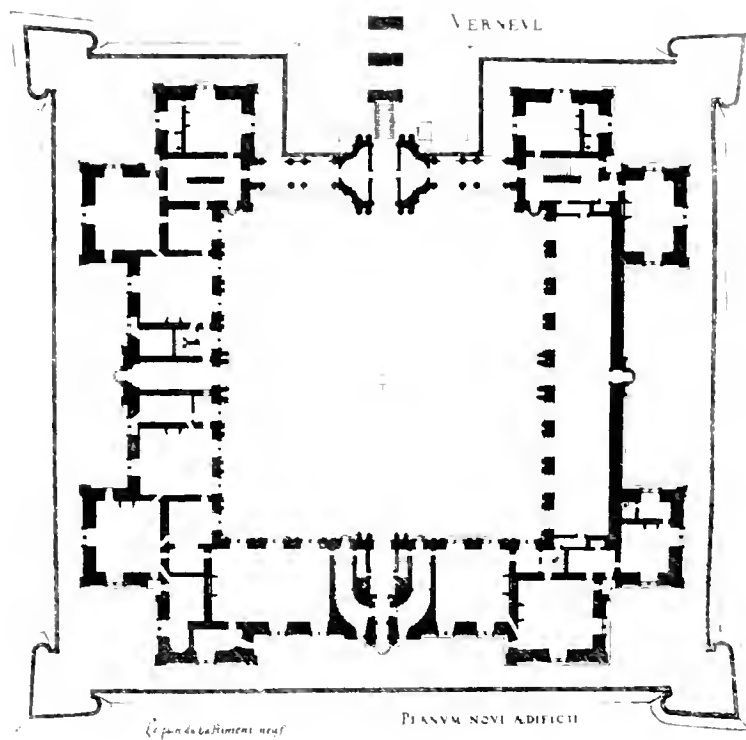


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VERNEUIL: GROUND PLAN AS DRAWN BY DU CERCEAU





## CHAPTER X

### NEO-CLASSIC ARCHITECTURE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

**H**ENRI III, the last of the Valois, was assassinated by Jacques Clément in 1589, and the sixteenth century went out in France under conditions of desperate confusion and political stress. The last quarter of the century had been almost a blank in architecture. Charleval and Verneuil, and the grand gallery at the Louvre were begun, alterations and additions were carried out here and there, but the country was distracted by civil wars, there was no money to build with, no leisure or opportunity for the practice of the arts. The result was a period of slackness and depression, in which the brilliant traditions of the third quarter of the sixteenth century were lost, and when order and some degree of prosperity were re-established in the early part of the following century, we shall find that something like a fresh tradition of design and technique has to be built up again. The death of Henri III closed, in fact, what we may call the second lap of the neo-classic manner in France. The first period, which opened with the arrival of the Italian artists at the end of the fifteenth century, ended to all intents with the death of François I. That King, the "amateur du premier rang," keenly enjoyed the employment of clever artists who could interpret his suggestions. It is possible that had he been thoroughly trained, and had he not been King of France François I might have proved himself a capable artist. As it was, with all his appreciation of the arts, he left them rather worse off than he found them. His was the age of the amateurs. Starting under the immediate inspiration of the King, the new fashion was eagerly taken up by the most powerful people at the Court, men who, from the King to the last *parvenu*, had no real knowledge of architecture, and not very much of the other arts. The result was the unchecked development of "bric-à-brac" art, and it is this aspect of the art of the François I period which has most strongly commended it to the connoisseur, and led to the misunderstanding of its actual place in the development of French architecture. Had it been in the first instance a genuine movement from within, that

is, a real attempt by trained artists to realize in building altered conditions of life, some organic modification of the art must have resulted much earlier than it did. Yet with the inconsiderable exception of certain individual plans, such as La Muette, Chambord, and the Château de Madrid, it is impossible to trace any marked advance in house-planning in the first forty years of the sixteenth century. Two types of plan were in use, the courtyard plan, and the plan "tout un masse" as Du Cerceau calls it, that is, a block plan with a corridor down the centre, such as Bohier's building at Chenonceaux. But of these plans, the courtyard was the direct descendant of the enclosed fortress plan of the Middle Ages, the only development being that this plan was in certain cases regularized and rectangulated, as at Bury and Villers Cotterets. The buildings were still in single thickness, the only access to the rooms was through each other, supplemented by a covered walk near the court on the ground floor, and by quantities of newel staircases set down on no particular system, wherever a separate set of rooms had to be served. As to the block plan, though modifications were introduced here and there, this form of plan had been used in the fifteenth century. Martainville (1483)<sup>1</sup> is as compact and convenient a house of moderate size as any built before the seventeenth century. The plan consists of a rectangle 76.6 by 53.0 with circular towers 24.0 in diameter, engaged on the four angles. The entrance, in the centre, opens on a corridor with rooms on either side, leading to a large newel staircase at the back of the house. The immense roof is used for rooms to its utmost possibility, there being three storeys in the roof, above the two principal storeys, giving a total of some twenty-five rooms.<sup>2</sup> Much the same plan was followed at Angerville Bailleuil,<sup>3</sup> also in Normandy, begun some sixty years later, though treated quite differently in elevation. Practically no advance had been made on this plan for over half a century.

It should, however, be borne in mind that the great majority of the important buildings of this time consisted of large extensions and remodellings of older buildings, and the plan was largely dominated by what was preserved of the older building. Gaillon Amboise, Blois,

<sup>1</sup> Date over key block in the south-west tower, not 1485 as stated by Sauvageot, whose plan does not show the building as it is, and whose drawings give a quite erroneous idea of its delightful quality.

<sup>2</sup> This roof, which is some fifty-three feet wide, is about forty-six feet high, from springing to ridge.

<sup>3</sup> See Sauvageot, "Palais, Châteaux, Hôtels, etc.," IV, 85, and iii. See also Chap. V p. 92, note.

Fontainebleau, Villers Cotterets, and St. Germain were all extensions of earlier buildings, and the additions were made in a somewhat artless fashion by building on room to room without any attempt at a systematic reorganization of the plan. The chief effort of designers was devoted less to the composition of the building as a whole than to its ornament, and in this latter regard there was a distinct falling off, at the end of the reign of François I, from the standard of workmanship introduced by the Italians early in the sixteenth century. The opportunities of employment for those skilful artists became rarer and rarer. From the first they had been regarded with jealousy and suspicion by the native workmen, and as the King's political embarrassments increased, he was less able to protect the foreigners. French workmen took their place, the first Italian tradition, a tradition, it is important to recollect, of pure ornament, faded away, and by the middle of the sixteenth century, the position in which we find the art of architecture is this. The Italian influence had broken up the mediaeval tradition in civil and domestic buildings, a new method of ornamentation had been introduced; but scarcely any serious attempt had yet been made to deal with the framework and structure of architecture. Serlio, the one Italian architect of any eminence, even if he did actually design Ancy-le-Franc and the Aile de la belle Cheminée at Fontainebleau, found his position in France untenable after the death of François I. The native master-builders still had it all their own way, innocent of the art and science of architecture, and as a rule not very scrupulous as to their methods of workmanship. These men, as De l'Orme pointed out, and his criticism is abundantly justified, built none too well; they were out of sympathy with the new manner, they did not understand it, and they had to do the best they could to satisfy their employers by plastering on to their buildings any Renaissance ornament on which they could lay their hands. Had Henri II been a man of the tastes of his father, had he, that is, continued François' practice of personal interference with his artists, it is difficult to see in what direction French architecture could have found its way out. Architecture is unlike painting and sculpture in that it has to comply with definite practical conditions, and it is the work of the architect to translate these into rhythmical and beautiful forms combined in organic sequence, that is, one condition leads on to another, and it is impossible to remove one part of a well-considered design without invalidating the rest. Many of the conditions so involved are not obvious or apparent on the surface, they lie back in the designer's

mind among the data on which he has to build up his design. Now bring in to control the designer an autocrat—king, nobleman, wealthy patron, whoever he may be—who possesses the amateur's dangerous faculty of "taste" but little knowledge of the processes by which a design is built up, or what, considered in all its bearings, it is there to do. The result is almost certain that such a person will see things in detail, not as a whole, and this once granted, one detail becomes as good as another, and there appears to be no reason why such details should not be varied as freely as the colours of a kaleidoscope. This is, in fact, what resulted from François' patronage of the arts so far as architecture was concerned. He left that art in a state of chaos, and it was fortunate for the art that Henri II, a far less attractive man than his father, was too indifferent in the matter to interfere with the architects and sculptors in the royal employment.

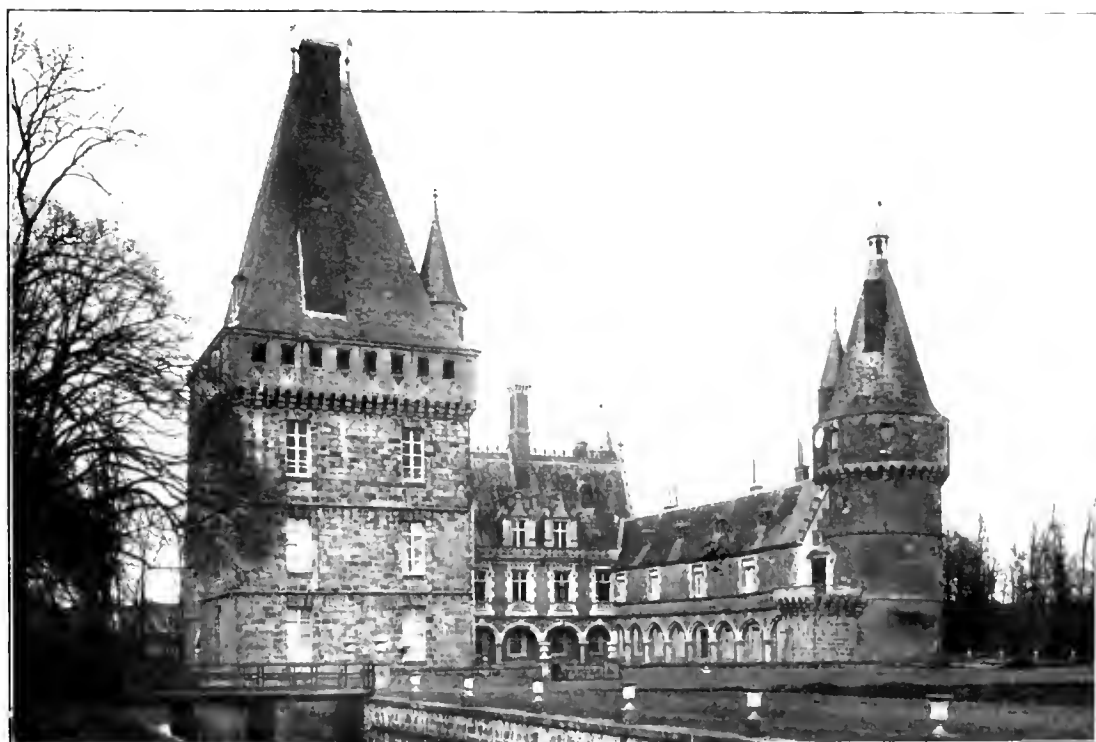
With the accession of Henri II to the throne begins the second chapter of the Renaissance in France. The King himself cared nothing for building, but his mistress, Diane de Poitiers, cared a great deal; and being herself very wealthy, and backed by the King's resources, she built freely and magnificently, and was probably the first in that series of great French ladies who took an active interest in architecture and made it the fashionable hobby which it continued to be almost down to the French Revolution. In spite of much that must have been exasperating in its triviality and absurdity, there can be little doubt that domestic architecture gained in the process. Architects were called upon to provide greater comfort in the house, more convenient planning, more suitable decoration; and it is only fair to admit the part played in this regard by such great personages as Diane de Poitiers, the Marquise de Rambouillet, and Mme. de Pompadour in three successive centuries. No serious student supposes that these ladies made any contribution to the technique of the arts, but the demand that they created stimulated architects and gave them their opportunity. Moreover, the King's personal indifference was the chance of his officials. Immediately after the accession of Henri II, Philibert De l'Orme was appointed architect and surveyor of the Royal buildings, and he at once devoted himself to the two main objects of his life apart from his art, namely, to cleanse the Augean stables of the building contractors who had robbed the late King right and left, and built detestably, and in the second place to clear the Court of the foreigner and to keep France for the French. In the first of these objects he was successful. Although recent French writers have



[Photo.]

[Mon. Hist.]

MARTAINVILLÉ: SEINE INF. (P. 158)



[Photo.]

[V. H.]

MAINTENON (P. 166)



attempted to magnify the master builder into the architect, De l'Orme was under no such illusion. He made short work of their peculation and embezzlements, and taught them that, for good or bad, a new era had set in, that their business was to take their orders from the trained architect and carry out his designs in an honest and workmanlike fashion.

It was a work that needed doing. It is sometimes assumed by eloquent and enthusiastic writers that the great buildings of the Middle Ages were the result of collective effort, as it were the sum total of the efforts of the faithful, each workman being an artist doing his work on his own, without the restraint and interference of the despotic architect, and without further thought than the work well done its own reward. This theory has always appeared improbable. Human nature does not alter so greatly in so short a time, and it is hardly to be supposed that a race whose members could work together as a happy family in the fourteenth century should have entirely lost its faculty of doing so in the sixteenth. Moreover, the great cathedrals, Lincoln, Amiens, Chartres, have their own rhythm, their harmony of proportion, their ordered sequence, not less than the masterpieces of classic and neo-classic architecture, and it is inconceivable that these great qualities can be arrived at by the unnumbered and unguided crowd in the one case any more than in the other. But even if this habit of indiscipline had ever prevailed in architecture, its days were now numbered. On the one hand the guilds had proved their corruptness by their incessant selfishness and rapacity; on the other, the Renaissance meant the emancipation, even the assertion, of the individual paramount, and men were not wanting to take their place in these altered conditions. François' mania for building, and the passion of the Humanists for antiquity, had drawn out a new class of men in France, men who devoted themselves to the study of ancient architecture, sometimes, as in the case of Du Pérac, mainly for purposes of archaeological record, but more often, as in the cases of De l'Orme and Bullant, with the practical purpose of qualifying themselves as architects, and of substituting for the crude efforts of the master-builders some more authentic version of neo-classic architecture. While Chambiges, Le Breton, and their kind were blundering about on the royal buildings, De l'Orme and Bullant were studying the antiquities of Rome on the spot, and, what was probably even more important than that, getting into touch with the Humanists of Rome, men of subtle brain steeped in the scholarship of the Renaissance, who,

if inaccurate in detail, were inspired by large ideas and an imaginative outlook on life which was new to these comparative barbarians from the north. We should like to know more, for example, of that society of noblemen and gentlemen at Rome,<sup>1</sup> who met for the purpose of reading Vitruvius, and included among its members Marcellus Cervinus, Cardinal di Sta. Croce, who gave De l'Orme his introduction to the Pope. Vasari describes the society as composed of persons of quality, a sort of Dilettanti Society, which a little later employed Vignola to draft its deliberations on architecture, and to make measured drawings of the ancient buildings of Rome. The virtuoso is suggested rather than the architect, yet even an acquaintance with such men must have had its educational influence on these quick-witted Frenchmen, who, so far as building processes were concerned, were their superiors, but who had everything to learn in regard to architecture as the art of ordered and rhythmical design.

The results, when they returned to France, were very different from the rudimentary notions of Renaissance architecture which prevailed at the Court of François I. De l'Orme's first design for St. Maur is a remarkable illustration of the advance in architectural sense, and though De l'Orme was unequal, and was finally driven back by Catherine de Médicis to the baser sorts of design, there were other men, notably Jean Bullant, who had also learned the lesson of Italian Renaissance architecture, and who realized that their art was something greater than detail heaped upon detail. There is thus a definite separation between the François I period and that which succeeded it and which closed with the death of Henri III. In the first period the principal charm lies in the ornament, and the earlier it is the better it is, and the more attractive in the *naïveté* of its mixture with the last remnants of Gothic. The west front of Caudebec is a remarkable example. This first impulse lost its edge, but in the latter part of the reign of François I the influence of the Fontainebleau School became paramount in ornament and gave it a fresh direction, bringing it more closely into touch with architecture. Meanwhile, French architects had come to the front and taken the development of their art into their own hands. Serlio left the country, a beaten and disappointed

<sup>1</sup> See Vasari (ed. Bologna, 1647, iii, 120): "essendo allora in Roma, un' accademia di nobilissimi gentil'huomini e signori, che attendevano alla letione di Vitruvio, fra quali era Messer Marcello Cervini, che fu per Papa, Monsignor Massei, Messer Alessandro Manzuoli & altri, si diede il Vignola per servizio loro a misurare interamente tutte l'anticaglie di Roma, & a fare alcune cose, secondo i loro capricci."



man, and though Primaticcio more than maintained his place by his personal charm and dexterity, he was an impresario rather than an architect, a man who organized and arranged designs, and saw to their execution by competent artists, rather than a designer working single-handed. The Italians were already discredited before the catastrophe of the latter part of the sixteenth century had arrested all the arts.

The advance made in this second period, that is, in the years between the death of François I and the death of Henri III, was on the whole considerable. In the first place, the architect had definitely established his status as an artist in building, a man whom it was desirable to employ in all important work, and, at all events in the case of the architect of the King, an official who ranked comparatively high in the Court hierarchy. His annual salary of 1,200 livres was the same as that paid to other important officers of the Court, and in the case of such men as De l'Orme the salary was largely increased by presentations to sinecure abbeys and priories. So far as the evidence is available, it does not appear that De l'Orme, Bullant, or Lescot ever acted as contractors, though De l'Orme possessed a stone quarry, on the merits of which he was discursive and eloquent, and the younger Du Cerceau possessed quarries and traded in the stone. The conditions of practice were not far removed from those of the present day; there was the architect who prepared designs and models, and the Devis or specification of works; the builder, such as Guillain, or Le Breton, or Chambiges, who tendered for the work and submitted his schedule of prices; lastly, there were the master tradesmen, masons, carpenters, and the like, the "jurés," men who were qualified by full membership of the Guilds, and who were formally appointed to examine the work and report on oath whether as carried out it complied with the contract, to a certain extent occupying a position half-way between that of the architect and the modern quantity surveyor. The scope of the architect's work was thus defined for the first time, and his training became more thorough and systematic. It is clear from De l'Orme's treatise that it included geometry and mathematics and the study of materials on the one hand, and on the other fairly extensive researches into the antiquities of Rome, either on the spot or in the text books of the time.

It is probable that Du Cerceau's multifarious publications were intended to meet the latter demand. The number of men who were able to study classical architecture in Italy must have been small, and the majority must have relied on pattern books of the most astounding

inaccuracy. On Du Cerceau's methods of archaeology I have already commented, but the habit continued into the following century, when Marot, for example, published elaborate plates of the Temple of Baal Bek, which he describes as being at Athens. The pattern books have to answer for much of the bad Neo-Classic outside Italy. They were freely used by designers of buildings, and in many cases were produced by Flemish or German draughtsmen such as De Vries. Hence the exuberant ornament, the gross proportions and perverted design of much of the architecture of the end of the sixteenth century. Even in France things were not very much better. If Du Cerceau's object was, as De Geymüller represented it to be, to familiarize his countrymen with the details of the Renaissance, he did a very bad service to the architecture of his country by his method of doing it.

The fact was that the neo-classic architecture in France was still immature and not quite certain of its direction. Brilliant individual artists had held the stage, together or in turn, but each had worked individually, and so far they had not succeeded in forming a school and a permanent tradition. De l'Orme's manner was different from that of Bullant, and Bullant's from that of Lescot and Goujon. Each of these men influenced their own immediate circle, but it will take another three generations in France to build up a uniform standard and tradition of architecture.

Architecture, however, and more particularly domestic architecture, was now drawing clear of the entanglements of the amateur and the master builder. Before the middle of the sixteenth century the irregular plan of the older houses had been reduced to order and symmetry. Instead of the many-angled enclosure of Blois and St. Germain, or the "cour ovale" at Fontainebleau, we find rectangular quadrangles as at Ecouen and Ancy-le-Franc. But the court enclosed on all four sides itself was found to be open to objections. Unless it was on a very large scale it was dark and stuffy, and this fact was noted by writers of the sixteenth century. Accordingly the buildings on the entrance side of the court were kept low, and designed as screen walls, with a pavilion of more or less importance to mark the entrance. Anet and Ecouen are early and remarkable examples of this treatment, which was followed on a more elaborate scale both at Verneuil and Charleval, both of which anticipate De Brosse's treatment of the entrance to the Luxembourg. In regard to internal arrangements, the single thickness plan, that is, suites of rooms with a corridor on one side only, remained the common practice, but the newel staircase was going out of fashion.

The two-way or "dogleg" staircase, as it is sometimes called, is found for the first time in the staircase at the Louvre, but the real revolution in staircases was made by De l'Orme's oval staircase at the Tuileries, which must have shown the way to the marvellous feats of masonry performed in the great stone staircases of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

This is not the only indication that French architects of this period were feeling their way to bigger things. Whereas in the earlier part of the century the "hortus inclusus," the comparatively small walled-in garden of mediaeval times, had been considered sufficient for important houses, by the second half of the century very large gardens were coming into fashion. The later gardens of Gaillon, the gardens of Anet, the immense schemes of Catherine de Médicis at Chenonceaux, the gardens of Blois, of Verneuil, of Charleval, of the Tuileries, are only a few among many instances which show the rapid development in garden design and the power of handling large areas of ground round the building. A careful study of Du Cerceau's plans will discover the first suggestions of features which became recognized elements of garden design a hundred years later. The wood berceaux of Blois and Montargis anticipate crudely the "treillages" of the following century, the water-piece of the garden at Gaillon, the rides in the park of Anet, show that the work of Lenotre was not so much revolutionary as the systematic development of an existing tradition. French architects were feeling their way towards a national style, a manner which, though it started from Italy, and was continually being reinforced by reference to Italy, became in the following century purely French, and established a world-wide ascendancy as the typical expression of neo-classic architecture.

The technical advance shown in elevations, that is, in the realization of plans, was more marked than in the art of planning itself. The motives of early Renaissance architecture in France were very limited. Each story was represented by an order, with its entablature and flat pilaster complete, and a heavy cornice at the top, elaborate in its ornament of shells, egg and tongue, dentils, and the like, and designed without consideration of the scale of the orders below. The whole idea of the design was to break up the wall surface into strips and panels, and so provide suitable spaces for the arabesques and delicate surface ornaments which formed the stock-in-trade of the Italian ornamentalist. Chambord, Blois, Fontainebleau, are familiar examples. Excellent use was made of the steep-pitched roofs, with their picturesque lucarnes

or dormers, as at Azay le Rideau, Blois, Meillant, Maintenon, or S. Aignan, forming as it were a rich and delicate cresting to the walls below. But the architecture was wanting in breadth of treatment. Fanciful as it was in detail, it was hand-to-mouth design, and little attempt was made to deal with large composition. An effort was made to break away from this towards the end of the reign of François I. Della Robbia, in his design for the Château de Madrid, used the arch and the column with some regard for their structural purposes, and some consideration of their aesthetic possibilities in the matter of light and shade; but the Château de Madrid was an exceptional building, and cannot be taken as typical of the François I manner, except in its general outline. That manner remained as it had begun, a fashion in surface decoration rather than a genuine phase of architecture. More than that, it was neither learned nor original. To cut the surface of a wall up into compartments by means of pilasters and entablatures is a commonplace and unprofitable motive. There is no particular reason either for its beginning or ending. And when the profiles of the mouldings and the proportions of the orders are neither correct according to the accepted rules or attractive in themselves, when they are perfectly monotonous and show no trace of fancy or invention, the result becomes wearisome in the last degree.

It was to the task of correcting these barbarisms, and rescuing French architecture from the rut in which it had been landed by the master builders, that the new men, the architects of Henri II and the later Valois kings more particularly addressed themselves. They were not wholly successful, but it was due to their efforts that the first real development of neo-classic architecture in France was possible at all. As was, perhaps, natural with men intoxicated by their new-found learning, the use that they made of their gleanings in Italy was rather pedantic. The orders loomed large and formidable in the forefront of architectural study. To design the orders in strict accordance with the proportions found in the remains of Classical Rome, and with the rules laid down by the authorities of the time, was the first ambition of every architect. The words of the language still seemed so important that as yet they were unable to pass very far beyond their repetition. Lescot's design for the Louvre is little more than a lesson learnt by heart and accurately repeated. Bullant's colossal order at Ecouen has no relation to the adjacent buildings, and De l'Orme, with that dreadful "French order" of which he was so proud, showed that he had never really considered the theory of the column

as an element of design. On the other hand, it was a valuable training in itself to study exactly these subtleties and nuances of architecture. It was the best possible correction to the slipshod and irresponsible methods of the builders and ornamentalists, indeed it was the first step towards the establishment of that tradition of neo-classic, that assured mastery of its details, which rendered possible the great achievements of the masters of the seventeenth century. Moreover, De l'Orme in the gallery of Chenonceaux, and Bullant in all his later work with the exception of the additions to the Tuileries, showed that they had themselves advanced beyond that first stage through which all designers have to pass, the stage in which details and tricks of expression seem to be the whole business of architecture. In the exterior of the gallery of Chenonceaux De l'Orme dispensed with the orders altogether. So did Bullant in the arches of the bridge at Fère-en-Tardenois, and when he used them at Chantilly he no longer treated them as mere strips on the surface, but handled them as integral and salient features of the entire design.

But unless it was Bullant none of these men had yet caught "the true Roman manner," as Wren once put it. They hardly realized the value of plain wall surfaces, or of what has been suggestively, if somewhat vaguely, called space composition, and in this they fell below the level of the Italian masters, and of Frenchmen in the following century. But they had greatly enlarged what one may call the vocabulary of architecture. None of the men who succeeded them had any excuse for being ignorant of the technical apparatus of neo-classic, and indeed the better men among them, such as the younger Du Cerceau, and De Brosse, appear to have been perfectly well trained in all its details.

The elements of future development are to be found, not only in this real advance in technique, but in the fusion of the arts, the equipoise and adjustment of relations which made it possible for the painter, the sculptor, and the architect to work successfully together. The gallery of François I at Fontainebleau, now almost ruined by its restorations, was the first and most memorable achievement of its kind in France, followed by Nicolo del Abate's paintings in the Salle de Bal, and the gallery of Ulysses, now destroyed, the sumptuous ceilings of the new Louvre, and the work of that group of younger men that the Constable collected at Ecouen. For once in a way in modern art architects and sculptors were in touch. It is impossible to say where Goujon left off and Lescot began, and even when working with an

architect so hard of hand as De l'Orme, Goujon's inimitable skill, and his instinct for the one inevitable phrase, kept the two arts in harmony, where a man of less genius would certainly have failed. It is not easy, nor is it always profitable, to single out one man as super-eminent where many are good, but one is sorely tempted to do so in the case of Goujon. De l'Orme did much to develop the art of architecture in France, but he leaves the impression of limitations, of a certain want of sympathy, and in spite of the fierceness of his temperament, of a want of fire and daemonic force, and it is probable that Goujon was the real moving spirit in that brilliant group, the artist pure and simple, the man untainted by social or political ambition, who cared for nothing but his art. Whether he was so or not, it is certain that after his flight to Italy the arts of France entered on that downward course, from which it took them fifty years or more to recover. Yet for one short generation, in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, the arts in France did in fact reach that delicate point of balance at which their harmonious union is possible. The architects had regard to opportunities for the painter and the sculptor, the painter and the sculptor readily complied with the inexorable conditions of architecture. In the catastrophe of the civil wars the arts fell back again, but the labours of Goujon, of De l'Orme and his contemporaries, were not wholly in vain; and when order was re-established in France, the tradition was resumed, and the development of French architecture proceeded steadily on the lines laid down by these pioneers. I must repeat again that it is wrong historically, and quite uncritical, to treat the Renaissance in France as an affair of the first fifty years of the sixteenth century, or indeed as solely confined to that century. So far as architecture was concerned, it was one long movement starting with crude experiments, advancing slowly and often with uncertainty, spreading over considerable periods of time, before it arrived at any degree of maturity. It was not completed by 1550 or by 1600, or by any definite year. All one can say of it is that it began early in the sixteenth century, that it reached certainty and assurance before the middle of the seventeenth century, and that again it advanced in ordered development till it topped the curve, and sank again to dulness and pedantry at the end of the eighteenth century. In this long tract of history, unmistakable changes will occur, the art of François Mansart differs from that of De l'Orme scarcely less than the art of the younger Gabriel differs from that of François Mansart, and it is of course easy to map out the different manners and assign

them to definite generations. But the important point to trace and to recollect is that throughout the whole period during which neo-classic architecture was vital, each fresh phase and development followed from that which had preceded it, in gradual and logical procession. It was only when the movement had practically exhausted itself that fashion succeeded fashion with crazy rapidity, for no other reason than the caprice of some amateur, or the ingenious advertisement of some artistic adventurer. French critics talk of the bankruptcy of contemporary architecture, but they are wide of the mark. French architecture went bankrupt with the old regime.

END OF VOLUME I



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